THOUGHTS FOR ALL TIMES

JOHN S. VAUGHAN

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THOUGHTS FOR ALL TIMES

VOL. II.

The Church Review for December 20, 1900, says: "The book is full of suggestive and beautiful thoughts, and should be a welcome present to teachers and others; it is attractively got up, and the print is delightfully clear."

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THOUGHTS FOR ALL TIMES

BY THE

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AUTHOR OF

"LIFE AFTER DEATH," "DANGERS OF THE DAY," "CONCERNING THE HOLY BIBLE," "EARTH TO HEAVEN," "THE PURPOSE OF THE PAPACY," ETC.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL GIBBONS

AND A PREFACE BY THE

RIGHT REV. J. C. HEDLEY, D.D., O.S.B.

LATE BISHOP OF NEWPORT

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PART III

THOUGHTS FOR ALL TIMES

CHAPTER I.

THE RIDDLE OF LIFE.

"Well! Life is a quaint puzzle. Bits, the most incongruous, join in each other, and the scheme thus gradually becomes symmetrical and clear; when lo! as the infant claps his hands and cries 'See! see! the puzzle is made out!' all the pieces are swept back into the box—the black box with the gilded nails."—LORD LYTTON.

IT is man's wont to form an absurdly exaggerated view of his own importance, and too often to forget what an exceedingly insignificant little creature he really is, considered in himself. In the display of this conceit and vanity he not unfrequently puts us in mind of the barn-door cock, which (according to George Eliot) believed the sun arose each morning for the express and sole purpose of hearing it crow!

To help us to arrive at a somewhat juster estimate of our true position in the vast creation, let us begin by making a supposition. We will suppose that by some Divine power we are carried away bodily from the earth and deposited upon the Polar Star. Looking down from such coign of vantage we gain a magnificent view of the whole mechanism of the planetary systems. Granted the

possession of suitable eyes, we at once behold countless constellations, groups of stars, and vast systems of planets on all sides of us. Among these we soon detect our own beautiful sun, bright, glistening and fiercely incandescent. Revolving round it, as a centre, we contemplate the four gigantic planets, Neptune, Uranus, Saturn and Jupiter. Round and round they sweep at a terrific pace, in circles of literally thousands of millions of miles in circumference.

A more careful and minute inspection finally reveals to us yet another planet. It is small, indeed, as compared with the four above mentioned, and insignificant in the extreme—so small, in fact, that twelve hundred, all rolled into one, would be needed to make a single star equal in size to Jupiter, and almost as many to construct one of the dimensions of Saturn. What is this poor little revolving speck, looking like a grain of dust, and almost lost amid the vast number of greater and grander orbs ? It is our earth ; the world on which we dwell. From our supposed position on the Polar Star it seems the merest point ; yet round and round it sweeps about the sun, floating without any visible support through the aerial wastes, bearing on its surface not only seas and mountains, rivers and lakes, forests and plains, but a living freight of some fifteen or twenty thousand millions of human beings, together with the towns and cities in which they live ; the great seaports, with their shipping and their merchandise ; and the teeming, busy emporiums of trade and commerce, industry and business. The whole is tearing through space at a pace immeasurably faster than the swiftest bullet ever projected from a cannon's mouth.

Contemplated from this point of view the earth

is no longer the important planet we at first supposed. Compared with the rest of creation the entire world is less than a tiny particle of dust or a single drop from some vast ocean. Yet in this tiny world man works out his destiny; it is the seat of his present life, labour and love. Having gazed intently upon the earth, as seen from afar, let us now draw nearer, and imagine to ourselves a little child just born into it. Consider the natural working of its mind. For in this child we see an image or type of ourselves, and may study the promptings and gropings of every human soul. On its first entry into this world it is carried along, like an unconscious thing, amid the stream of events and circumstances that surround it. As years, however, pass away a change takes place. Not only does the body develop, but the powers of the mind also unfold. Reason gradually begins to dawn. Like the first faint gleams of morning stealing over the eastern hills, and heralding the day, come the early promptings and inquirings of the young child, heralding the dawn of reason; and as the seasons slowly succeed one another, reason develops and strengthens ever more and more.

Looking with wondering eyes over the earth the child gazes out far and wide upon all around it: the wide stretching plains, the deep sonorous seas, snow-capt mountains, etc. And, as it gazes, strange thoughts like shadows flitter through its mind and provoke its interest and curiosity—and a number of burning questions begin to stir within its innermost soul, till at last they formulate themselves in words, and the child, full of wonder, pauses to inquire: *How* did I get here? *Who* placed me here? *What* am I here *for?* *Whence* have I come? *Whither* am I going? What does

it all mean? And how is it all going to end? What is the answer to the riddle of life? As the child looks out upon its earthly dwelling-place it is more than ever sensible of its position as a stranger in a strange land. "Those mountains, ah! they were there," it muses, "long before I was born. The rushing river, the wild cascade, the bubbling stream, are old features in the landscape. I alone am new. I alone am an intruder."

It looks up to the sun, flooding the heavens with its light; and as it basks in the beneficent rays a voice within its heart cries out: "That same sun now shining on me has shone for thousands of years before I was so much as thought of. Its bright rays cheered and comforted countless generations that have been born and have run their course, and passed away, and are now numbered with things forgotten, and so it will continue to shine on thousands as yet unborn." And as the child strolls down to the pebbly beach, and hears the music of the seething waters, and listens to the waves dashing and breaking on the shore, and grinding the rocks to powder, it again reflects that "those same sounds have tingled in the ears of multitudes, long since dead and turned to clay."

At last he wanders down to some lonely cemetery and lingers amid the memorials of the dead. All around lie the melancholy tombstones. They are old and grey, and gnawed away by the tooth of time, while over many is spread the moss of centuries. The very characters, once so clearly cut upon their polished surfaces, are now blurred and worn, and hardly legible. He deciphers with difficulty the different inscriptions. "Pray for such a one, who died in 1750," or "Of your charity, breathe a prayer for such another, who fell asleep

in the Lord in 1699," etc. And while he reads, he hears, in fancy, the dead muttering in their shrouds. They seem, in fact, to be preaching to him from out their pulpits of cold stone, and to be breathing in his ear words of awful warning : " Hodie mihi, cras tibi." "To-day for me, but to-morrow for thee." " What I am now (a little dust), thou shalt soon be, and what thou art now (living flesh and blood), I once was." " Yes, I who am now lying here, was once e'en as thou. I too was once rocked in a cradle, fed at the breast, and fondled on the knee. I grew up in strength and beauty, and basked in the sunshine of a mother's love, and gambolled and made merry with my companions on the green. Oh ! how gaily we were wont to run and shout, and scream in our thoughtless play. Then life seemed one long holiday. Yes ; I had, as thou, my days of pleasure and my days of pain and disappointment, my sunshine and my shadow ; though now forgotten and corrupt, I too was once absorbed by thoughts of my business or my profession, my interests, and my anxieties, my enemies and my friends. Aye, I strutted my brief hour upon the stage, in anxious care or thoughtless gaiety. But the years stole by, and full soon the drama of life was ended : the play was over ; the curtain fell. My body, like a used-up garment, was flung on one side, and thrown into the grave. Thou, whilst thou standest and gazest, art actually passing along the same route which I have already trodden. Thy days are numbered, and thou wilt soon be by my side."

And, as such thoughts course each other through the brain, the shortness and uncertainty of life are borne in upon the mind with resistless vividness and force. Oh ! how brief, how transient a thing

is life! We are here to-day; to-morrow we are gone. To what are we to compare our present state? To the passage of a ship through the sea. There is a little stirring of the waters, a little fuss and foam and commotion in its immediate neighbourhood, but it passes on; the waters close up, and no trace of its path is to be found. What is life? A vapour which endures for a little while, and then vanishes away. Or it has been compared to a bird winging its way through the air. We gaze upon it for a moment, but see! it is gone. Or like a spark, it glows for an instant in the darkness of the night. But before we have time to cry—Behold! it is swallowed up again in darkness.

A hundred years ago, not one of you who now read these lines had any existence. You had not been summoned into the world. In a hundred years more you will most certainly have left it. Life then resembles a hyphen, connecting two eternities. There is the eternity of the past, out of which we have been drawn, and there is the eternity of the future, into which we are so soon to plunge. A moment indeed separates us from it. But on that single moment the whole of our endless future is balancing.

But the child will pursue its inquiries further, and ask: *How* did I get here? That it did not make itself is quite clear. It was not even consulted in the matter. God alone made that child, or could make it. No man could do it. No! its parents were but the instruments—in a sense, the *unconscious* instruments. They knew not, nor can they now explain, how the marvellous structure of even the material body was built up; how muscle and bone, and sinew and ligament were knit together into a single living, breathing whole. It is

a work Divine. Who is foolish enough to imagine that unaided man can produce such a marvel? He, who cannot make the least insect that crawls, nor the smallest floweret that blows, how much less can he, of himself, make a human being? Call together your men of science, your learned philosophers; summon your Darwins, Spencers, Cliffords, Lyells, and bid them construct for you, by their own power, the simplest living object: the robber bee, for instance, that pilfers the nectar from the flowers; or the common house fly that buzzes against the window-pane. Bid them create a fruit, a flower, a leaf, nay, a single blade of common prairie grass. Impossible! As well bid them create sun and moon, and every gleaming star. No. A power superior to man *must* have been his author. An Intellect and a Will mightier than that of man himself were needed to bring him into existence, and that Intellect and Will we call GOD. God made me. He is the author of my being. He and no other placed me in this world. But consider the consequence. If God made me, then I am His. Since He fashioned me, I belong to Him. He is my supreme Lord and sovereign Ruler. I belong more truly to Him than the picture belongs to the painter who paints it, than the statue to him who hews it from the rock, and shapes it in comeliness and beauty. In fact, nothing belongs to me half so absolutely as I and everything else belong to God. There are many things that we call our own, and of which we dispose as we please; yet we created none of them, and not one of these can be strictly said to owe its existence to us. How infinitely greater and further reaching, then, is God's dominion over man, than man's dominion over his own handiwork! The question is, do we realise

this? Do we bear in mind the consequences of our subjection to an Almighty Being? Are we conscious, as the days and weeks of toil go by, and as years are added to years, that we are "not our own," but are creatures of an Infinite Creator; that we are bound under the strictest and most binding obligation to obey Him, serve Him, honour Him, and love Him?

But granted that God made us, and that we are His; and, consequently, that we must serve Him as our supreme Lord and Master; granting all this; reason will not rest there. It demands further, Why did God make us? What was it that induced Him to call us forth from the bottomless depths of pure nothingness? Now observe, between "nothing" and "something" there yawns an infinite gulf. The two terms are separated, as philosophers speak, by the whole diameter of being. Hence to call my soul from nothingness into existence, God had, if I may so express it, to exercise the whole of His omnipotence. And what was His motive? Was it because I was in any way necessary to Him? Such an idea is in itself absurd. If He did without me during a past eternity, why should I now suddenly become necessary? No! Was it then because of some advantage He was to derive from my existence? An equally impossible suggestion. God is infinite. He possesses within Himself the source of all perfection and felicity, and can stand in need of no one. What is the entire world in His sight? A mere nothing. What are the heavens and the earth, and all men and angels united before His dread presence? No more than a drop of morning dew. How could we therefore add to His essential glory, or increase a happiness already infinite?

No ; He made us ; but it was not through necessity, nor was it through any advantage He could derive from our existence.

Why then was it ? It was by reason of His inherent goodness and love. Goodness is always diffusive. Goodness yearns to impart its treasures, and to let others share in its happiness and possessions. God desired that His own happiness and glory should radiate beyond Himself. As the sun is not only bright itself, but shoots forth its golden beams far and wide, and gladdens ten times ten thousand worlds, so God is not only in Himself Infinite Goodness, but He loves to impart and diffuse His gifts and favours among others. Hence He made man, not through necessity, nor even through any advantage He could hope to reap from his creation, but through pure, unadulterated love. Indeed this is the only motive consonant with our very knowledge of the nature of God ; and it is just precisely the motive He assigns. " Behold I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore I have drawn thee out of nothingness." No other motive can be assigned. But here again we ask, What is the consequence ? The consequence is, that we must love Him in return. Love begets love, even between creatures ; how much more should the love of the Creator incite and enkindle love in the heart of the creature ? If that Divine Power, who stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, condescends to lavish His love upon me, surely the very least I can do is to love Him in return to the utmost extent of my limited capacity. Nor is this all. He not merely made me, but He has surrounded me with His gifts and favours. " All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing

that is made." He has given us great gifts ; and, what is more, to Him we owe the very capacity of enjoying them, without which the gifts themselves would be of little worth. We may divide these gifts into those which are particular and into those which are general. Among our *particular* gifts are life, health, the sense of sight, of hearing, of taste, of smell, and touch ; and above all and beyond all others in the natural order, reason and free will.

The five senses put us in relationship with the whole of external nature : and the intellect enables us to think of those external objects, and to reason about them in a rational manner, and to reach out even to the unseen.

By God's *general* gifts we mean those of which all men may make use. Thus the earth, our dwelling-place ; the air we breathe ; the food by which our animal wants are supplied ; the sun which warms and cheers us, as well as delighting us by its beauty. All these things are so many gifts from God, so many tokens of His love, so many proofs of His affection and solicitude for us. We are ready enough to *use* His gifts. There can be no doubt about that. We are never weary of extracting pleasure, amusement, happiness and advantage from every creature capable of yielding it. But how often do we pause, in the midst of our career, to turn a grateful, loving glance towards Him whose goodness has laid open all these treasures ? Did you ever tarry to consider the magnitude of God's gifts, or the measureless value of even the very least of them ? Take, as an instance, *the gift of sight.* The eye ! What a marvellous organ ! If destroyed by an accident, what can supply its place ? Who can manufacture another ? Though it is a physical thing, a

thing formed of flesh and blood and *mere matter*, no man can manufacture such an organ. He has within his reach all the material elements of which it is composed, yet he cannot contrive so to put them together as to form an eye that can be of the smallest service to anyone. Science has made great strides ; it can do many grand and startling things, but it is powerless to provide a blind man with the organ of vision. It has made many wondrous discoveries, but it has never discovered how to fashion anything to correspond to that. In point of size it is an insignificant organ, yet what endless marvels it discloses for our instruction and delight. It throws open to us the entire heaven with all its myriads of palpitating stars. It reveals to us all the beauties of the world : trees and flowers ; the graceful forms and sparkling hues of thousands of gorgeous insects, and the exquisite colouring of countless birds and beasts, and of fish and finny monsters of the deep, to say nothing of countless gems and precious stones. By aid of the eye we are able to tread our way through the mazes of a great town, or to wander safely over hill and dale ; to read books and papers ; to contemplate the finest works of the sculptor and the painter ; and, what perhaps is most pleasing of all, to gaze into the face of friends and relations, and to read of their affection therein, more truly than we can gather assurance of it from their lips ; to contemplate a love indeed which is often too deep for words.

All this, and far more, is included in the gift of sight. Yet this is one of the lesser gifts of God. Probably no one truly realises its magnitude till he loses it. The blind (who have not always been blind) alone know how to estimate it at its full

value. And what has been said of sight might be said, in a greater or lesser measure, of *all* the other senses—and, indeed, of all that we enjoy in the order of nature. To God we owe our existence; and if our existence, then, of course, all that is included in the term: every organ, every limb, every faculty of mind, and every power of body. How we should, therefore, thank God for His goodness and generosity! Yet how many of us make use of His gifts merely to offend the Giver.

But, further, God not only made us and all that exists around us, but He preserves and maintains us each succeeding moment. Nothing is, or can be, self-supporting. To say that any creature is self-sufficient is to say that it is independent of God, and needs not God, which is absurd. Let me illustrate my contention by an example. I lift a great stone from the ground. I raise it till it is on a level with my head. Will it remain there? Yes; but only so long as I support it. If I remove my hands the stone cannot continue suspended in mid air, but falls abruptly to the ground. So when God lifts us out of nothing it is not enough. He must needs maintain and preserve us, day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute. St. Augustine reminds us that we "are as much indebted to God for each succeeding moment of our existence as we are for the very first." That being the case, how our hearts ought to be continually welling over with gratitude and thankfulness.

Many other considerations might be made to awaken similar sentiments; but let us pass them by to ask: *Whither* am I going? We are ever hastening on towards eternity. You have contemplated the mountain torrent skipping and

gurgling merrily over the stones? How quick, how sprightly, how glittering! *That is Youth.* You have watched the same broadening out into a full flowing stream? *That is Manhood* and mature age. You have looked upon it also as it expanded into a wide majestic river, till its waters, with slackened pace, glided on almost imperceptibly, to be at last lost in the deep ocean? *That is Old Age,* ending in eternity. We are all like to a river, hurrying on to throw ourselves into that boundless, bottomless main. Death is the dark entry through which we must pass. Those gloomy portals loom in the uncertain distance. Every moment brings us a step nearer. Every hour diminishes the interval separating us from them. Often we may wish to pause in our onward course. Impossible! Often we would gladly linger on in the groves of pleasure and dissipation, or even call back again the days long dead, or arrest the fleeting hour. But no. It cannot be! A power stronger than ourselves urges us on. As well seek to stay the earth revolving on its axis, or to check the meteor's flight, as to lay a staying hand on the rushing river of Time.

But *whither* are we hurrying so fast? Into eternity. Aye, but what kind of eternity? There are two: one of joy ineffable, another of sorrow inexpressible. The one is a home of peace, pleasure, delight, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." The other is a bottomless abyss, where eternal disorder and confusion, and endless darkness reign. Darkness in the intellect; darkness in the will; darkness in the heart; as well as darkness before the eyes. Into one of these two places we shall each soon find ourselves. Which, we should each ask our-

selves, is to be *my* eternity? It depends upon myself. "Before you lie life and death; that which you choose, you shall have." No one need trouble to inform us which he is choosing. We can tell by observing his life, his conduct, his general behaviour and character. If he is doing what he believes to be right; if he is acting up to his conscience; if he is striving earnestly and practically to carry out God's will, even when it costs him some sacrifice, we know that man is choosing the bright and glorious eternity; if not, we are equally sure that he is choosing the eternity of misery, remorse, pain and endless agony. What a privilege to help the thoughtless and the giddy to make a proper choice, and to reach at last the haven of everlasting rest!

CHAPTER II.

DUST TO DUST; AND ASHES TO ASHES.

THE greatness, the dignity, and the power of man, have in all ages formed the favourite themes of the poet and the rhetorician. "What a piece of work is a man!" exclaims the immortal bard of Avon. "How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" (*Hamlet*, Act II., Scene 2). Marvel at his ingenuity and dexterity, cries out the scientist. Who so skilled in all the arts and sciences? See how he guides the electric spark, and sends it to the uttermost bounds of the earth with declarations of peace or with threats of war. Watch how the most unruly forces of nature yield him service and call him master. As obedient slaves they bear him and his, mile after mile, along the iron way, across distant continents, through mountain ranges, over foaming torrents and fordless rivers. Yea, they will transport him with safety even athwart the trackless sea, and bear him up amidst the most violent storms and tempests that ever wind did blow. Or turn to another witness of his genius. Consider his skill as exemplified in the gigantic structures that cover the land from shore to shore. Contemplate the

palaces, the cathedrals, the public buildings and costly monuments of our great cities, that man's cunning has devised, and man's hands have so carefully and wondrously woven together out of the hard stone or the solid marble! What is there that can resist his power or withstand his industry and intelligence?

Such is the language of the world: and, when not its actual language, such is at least its thought and opinion. In this age especially, when new powers are being unfolded and fresh discoveries are continually coming to light; when, too, every department of science, of industry and art, is becoming more and more cultivated and studied; when education is daily more and more extending its borders, and embracing a wider and wider circle, we are apt to lose ourselves in the thought of our supposed greatness, and to forget our inborn weakness and misery—to be, in a word, so preoccupied with the fairy-like colours that play about this fragile bubble of life, as to forget how soon it is to burst, and all its glory to vanish away—

> Come la bolla, che da morta gora
> Pullula un tratto, e si resolve in nulla.

Hence it is with special reason that the Church, that great witness of truth, loves to remind us of our real littleness and insufficiency. So that, while our ears are yet tingling with the sounds of praise and flattery concerning man's dignity and greatness, her solemn words of warning come stealing in upon us like the dread and menacing tones of an alarm bell: "Remember, man, that thou art but dust."

Dust! From the dust we come. Back to the

dust we go. "The body shall return to the earth from which it was taken, and the spirit to Him who made it." This is the grand truth we have to learn, the solemn fact to be kept before us. Old and young, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, boast as you may of your fancied glories, your titles and your fame, back you must sink into the womb of earth from which you emerged, and mingle again with the dust.

What stupendous lessons we are taught as we wander forth into the lonely cemetery, with the buried thousands slumbering beneath! Hush. Not a sound. Oh! how still, how silent lie the thousands, whose voices once formed the city's ceaseless roar, and whose hastening footsteps once made each street resound with the low, dull murmur of never-ending toil! A century—perhaps two or three centuries ago, and that very dust was animated by ten thousand principles of life. It moved amid animated scenes and along busy paths. It sauntered through the market-place, and strolled in the public squares. It stood behind the counter or at the desk; it declaimed in the courts of justice; it harangued in the senate, it exhorted from the pulpit. It bought, it sold; it struggled and fought; it ate and drank; it played and laughed and made merry. It travelled from place to place, and was dressed up and adorned; it was loved and cared for, and made much of. And now? Now it lies at the mercy of every wintry blast.

Take up a handful of this dust. It is light and dry. See how the rude wind carries it off: see how it scatters it—now north, now south, now east, now west. Yet that handful of dust was once perchance a human heart that throbbed and

panted with passion as yours, dear reader, may be throbbing now—a heart where love or hate, envy or ambition, once made a home ! This crumbling, powdery earth that now we tread so contemptuously beneath our feet was once, perhaps, a pair of childish eyes, beaming with light and intelligence. Eyes that looked up with fondness into a mother's sympathetic face, and spoke a language sweeter than all others to that mother's heart. But now mother and son, parent and child, are resolved again into their primordial form.

They lived their span of life. They spent their short day. They strutted their brief hour upon the stage. Then, when the fever of life was over, they were laid to rest in the grave, and nature's alchemy speedily wrought the change : the industrious worms have dissected each limb and each bone : the rain has filtered again and again through the unsightly mass. Summer's heats and winter's frosts have been busy at work year after year, and now all that remains of what was once so surpassing fair, are a few ounces of dust.

Is not this a solemn, and at the same time a salutary reflection : teaching us the condition of human existence, and revealing to man his inherent nothingness, and vanity, and laying bare, as with the scalpel, the interior foulness of what is so beauteous without ?

The reflection we make concerning others will in turn be made concerning ourselves. In a short space of time we, too, must pass on to the cemetery. Your youthful limbs that bear you now, dear readers, from place to place with such grace and ease ; your countenances now lit up with pleasure, now cast down with sorrow ; your arms and hands and lithesome fingers, applied to so

many wondrous ends and purposes, will soon have nothing left to represent them but a little dust: nothing better will remain to show what once had been, but a shovelful of clay. "Dust to dust; and ashes to ashes."

The soul of man has not its resting-place here. But God would place it here for its trial and probation. As a mere spirit it would be neither seen nor heard, so God drew the dust of earth around it, and sent it, clothed in this earthly vesture, to live and move for awhile among men. What, indeed, are we; what is any man but an apparition? For what else is an apparition but a spirit, which takes to itself a visible form, and appears? Such is man. Is not the soul, that thinking, reasoning, knowing, and loving principle, a spirit invisible and spiritual? And is it not by taking a body, a visible and material form, that the spirit appears, is known, recognised, communicated with, and consciously approached? When the soul's term of probation terminates it casts aside the trammels of flesh and blood and exists as a pure, unimpeded spirit. It throws off this vesture, never more to resume it *in its original corruptible state.* It will, in very truth, be one day clothed again in its body; but that body will be spiritualised, glorified, and in its qualities and attributes wholly changed, for "corruption will put on incorruption."

But in the meantime we are all hastening to decay. Every country, state and city throws off its inhabitants as a tree or a shrub casts its leaves when autumn winds blow strong and cold. Generation after generation departs to make room for others. Like the waves of the sea, one follows after another, each in turn breaking and disap-

pearing as it strikes against the eternal shore. The approach of one is but the signal for the departure of another. As we gaze around and see the new generation entering the world, we realise that *our* generation has nearly had its day. Every infant that is born, every child we meet upon the way, seems to cry out in unmistakable language: "Make room," "Give place," "You have had your turn." "Your day is waning: your evening is drawing to a close; your night is coming on; prepare to depart, and make room for us."

But besides these external voices we may hear similar warnings from within. Our own frail being is ever reminding us of our approaching dissolution. Every pain, every ache, every sense of weariness, of lassitude, of depression and distress, clearly indicates disorder and decay in some part or another of our complicated system. Why do we take so much nourishment? Why eat and drink every day, and many times a day? To repair the loss of tissue, and the wear and tear of life. So, again: why rest and sleep? Why the darkened room, the soft couch, and the hush of sounds when the day is done? Why, but to afford us the opportunity to recover our wasted strength, and to revive our flagging energies, that we may linger on a little longer. What does each beat of our hearts, each pulsation of our blood (every one of which is accompanied by some waste and wearing away of the organism) do, but take up and re-echo in its own mute but expressive language the warning of holy Church: "Remember, man, thou art dust, and unto dust thou shalt return." Thus all things, both without and within, instruct us that we have not here a lasting city.

But if all things serve to remind us of this momentous truth, why, it may be asked, should the Church recall it so frequently to our minds? Why should she deem it necessary every Ash Wednesday to strew the ashes on our bowed heads, and to bid us remember our last end? The reason is that we are required not merely to know, but to realise the fleeting nature of this life; not to believe only, but to be impressed and influenced by this belief. How few there are who are so impressed! How small the number who even, when given the premises, can draw the conclusion! Would, indeed, the robust and healthy so glory in their strength, and reckon with so much confidence on a long and prosperous life, were they to reckon that "all flesh is grass"? Would the young and comely take so much vain complacency in their beauty and good looks were they really sensible of the fact that, "like the flowers of the field, so shall they perish," and wither and fade "as the prairie grass that to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven"? If all believe these truths, why is their effect so slight? Why do they neither humble the proud, nor make virtuous the vicious? Let the rich and the prosperous, and those who spend themselves in the ceaseless struggle to amass yet more, pause to reflect on the approaching hour when, as the Holy Spirit says, "under them shall the moth be strewn and worms shall be their covering," when their best friends shall leave them, and shrink back horrified from their corrupting and hideous corpses.

Death teaches the haughty and imperious as it passes by his poor and lowly brothers in the street, that he and they were moulded out of the

same clay; and that the self-same end awaits them all. It points out the folly, no less than the wickedness, of those who dare to raise their puny hands against the supreme Arbitrator of their fate.

But it appeals with overwhelming force to the sensualist, and mocks the insanity of those who are willing to sacrifice God and an eternity of bliss for the degrading and bestial pleasures of the flesh.

The day at last dawns whose evening we shall never see. The hour strikes whose close we shall never know. That solemn and awful moment approaches upon which the whole of our eternity is balancing; that point of time in which our whole being undergoes its last permanent change. The transition from time to eternity; from fickleness to fixity, from a natural to a spiritual state, is upon us. That transition which millions have already passed through, which has been experienced by so many even whom we have intimately known and tenderly loved, is now to be experienced by us.

Yes, for now it is *my* turn. Yesterday it was for such a one; to-morrow it will be for such another, but to-day it is for me. What will our thoughts be then? What shall we feel when we find ourselves hurried on towards the very brink of eternity: borne on as a drowning man is borne along by the rapids: unable to turn back, to tarry for awhile, or to arrest even for one brief moment our approaching end?

Already we seem to hear the voice of the omniscient Judge, and to catch faint glimmers from that "great, white throne." The fear of death comes upon us, and cold beads of perspiration start from every pore, and stand out like the

hoar-frost upon our brow. How we shall then reproach our cowardice in not having been more exacting and severe with ourselves. It is not so much the knowledge that we have sinned that will cause us such excruciating anguish, but rather that, knowing we were sinners, we did so little to wash out and atone for sin—that we made so little use of such abundant and such varied opportunities.

And with such regrets and vain lamentations—"vain," because made *then* and not *now*, the time wears on, and the fatal moment arrives; and those who have watched and tended us, it may be for many days and nights, will look each other sorrowfully in the face, and softly whisper, "Ah! it is all over"; "See,—he has ceased to breathe"; the "throbbing heart is still." . . . Then close the eyes: fold the hands: stretch out the limbs. This is no place for the cold clay. Bear him away. Lay earth to earth, and dust to dust. Hide the corpse beneath the ground. . . . Was he learned, rich, noble? Had he many friends, wide possessions, a great name? Had he made a reputation for himself? Was he a leader of men, a renowned politician, a noted warrior, a writer, a speaker, a poet? . . . Pause not to inquire. It brooks nothing. 'Tis an idle question. Hide him 'neath the earth. Place the stone above him, and on it write the one word: "Vanity." But one thing really signifies: was he in the grace of God?

> The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Await alike th' inevitable hour,
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

CHAPTER III.

MAN A MICROCOSM.

Of all visible creatures existing on the face of the earth there is not one half so deserving of our study and contemplation as man. Man has been called a microcosm (μικρός-κόσμος), or little world, because he contains within himself the elements and properties of all that exists around him. He has existence in common with the rocks and the soil: he possesses the power of growth and development in common with plants and trees; he enjoys the capacity of sensation and motion, and the faculties of sight, taste, smell, etc., in common with the birds of the air and the beasts of the forests and the fields; and, lastly, he has the glorious gift of reason and intelligence in common with the highest angels and archangels of heaven. He thus unites and, as it were, concentrates within his own insignificant bulk qualities the most unlike and capacities the most diverse, which are distributed in an ever-varying measure over the rest of creation. *In this respect*, indeed, man surpasses the highest of the angels, and even in heaven might well excite their envy, were envy possible in the regions of perfect bliss. Man has been defined a rational animal—"animal intellectu præditum." He belongs to the genus

animal; the specific difference, however, between him and all other animals is, that he is rational—*i.e.*, endowed with intelligence.

A little reflection will at once convince us of the justice of the definition. Man is truly an animal. As truly an animal as a dog or a horse, a peacock or an owl, or any other furred quadruped or feathered biped. He is endowed with limbs and organs, nerves and muscles, stomach and brains, just as they are. Like other animals, man breathes the air, lives by food, and needs rest and sleep at certain intervals; and, like them, he would speedily expire if these were denied. The greatest king on earth has just as much need of a heart and lungs, a spinal cord, and an alimentary canal, and of muscular and nervous tissues and the rest, as the costermonger's donkey that kicks up his heels or browses the thistles on the king's highway. The sun scorches, the rain wets and the frost bites one as the other. If you beat them they will suffer; if you prick them they will bleed; and if you poison them they will die. Man, like the beast, is subject to disease, decrepitude, and to old age. One no less than the other, after the lapse of a few years, sickens, disintegrates, falls into pieces, and sinks into a common grave, to be heard of no more in this world.

So far as man's merely physical condition is concerned there is very little to choose between him and the beasts. In fact, other animals not merely equal, but surpass him in almost all his corporal gifts; so that, considered simply as an animal, man is a very poor and inferior one. The ox surpasses him in strength of limb; the squirrel in agility; the deer in swiftness and sureness of foot. The eagle possesses keener and

clearer vision; the fox and the hound a truer scent; the crocodile stronger jaws; and the boa-constrictor a greater power of digestion. Man can neither dive like the otter, swim like the fish, nor cleave the summer air with pinions spread like the swallow or the swift; he can neither scale the craggy mountains of eternal snow, like the grizzly bear; nor leap from peak to peak, like the goat or nimble-footed roe.

His voice is not so loud as that of the angry lion, nor his minstrelsy so sweet as that of the lark or nightingale.

In strength, in endurance, in subtlety, in grace of movement, in length of days, in power of resistance, and in almost every physical quality, man is bound to confess himself immeasurably inferior to the beasts. So far as his body is concerned he is not only an animal, but a very contemptible and sorry animal indeed.

God, however, has bestowed upon him one great and priceless gift in the order of nature, which compensates, and even more than compensates, for all these disadvantages—a gift which at once renders him superior to all other animals, however powerful and strong; and that is the marvellous gift of Reason.

It is reason that at once, and, as it were, with a single wave of a magician's wand, transforms this feeble and helpless creature into the mighty and all but resistless sovereign, whom we contemplate with so much wonder and admiration. It is reason alone that constitutes man the undisputed ruler of the earth; that places the imperial crown upon his head, and the sceptre of authority

in his hand, and proclaims him king of the visible world.[1]

By aid of this priceless gift he makes the very elements his slaves and obsequious servants. He can harness the winds to his ships of war, like mettlesome steeds, and so traverse the broadest and stormiest sea undaunted. He can make the lightning his trusty messenger; and compel fire and water to labour for him, and to set ten thousand wheels in motion in factories and mills scattered all over the land: here grinding and crushing the hardest gold-bearing quartz: and there spinning and weaving the softest cotton into the most delicate and gossamer fabrics. He pierces the mountains, skims the seas, and ascends into the clouds. Nay, more; he can hold converse with the most distant extremities of the world, and while seated comfortably at his breakfast table, read, over his tea and toast, detailed accounts of what is taking place in the furthermost parts of the earth—the inundations in Spain, the strikes in Germany, the earthquakes in Japan, the riots in China, or the famine in Russia.

All creation he forces into his service, and treats as an irresponsible autocrat. He robs the sheep of its fleece; the seal of its fur; the bear of its winter coat; the elephant of its ivory; the whale of its precious oils; the swan of its down; and the bee of its honey. The spirited horse must carry him; the hound must hunt for him; and the

[1] There is, of course, another side to the picture, suggested by these lines of Schiller (which scarcely bear translating), *viz.*:—

> "Der Mensch entsteht aus Morast, und watet eine Weile in Morast, und macht Moras, und gährt wieder zusammen in Morast," etc

patient lowing herds must supply his dairy with milk and cream, and stock his larder with wholesome and nutritious foods. Thus God's good gift of reason enables this puny defenceless creature, man, to lay all creation under contribution ; and to force, so to speak, both great and small down on their knees before him, ready to follow his will, and to carry out his bidding.

Such, in the barest outline, is the inestimable value of the gift of reason.[1] We call attention to it, in order that, realising to some extent its priceless worth, we may render the heartier thanks to God, and strive the more earnestly to employ it ever in the service of the Giver. Indeed, if properly used, there is no more powerful auxiliary in our struggle after sanctity. It is true that some very silly people try to persuade themselves that the Church fears or despises knowledge and intelligence in her children. She does nothing of the kind. On the contrary, she knows full well, and is the first to acknowledge, that reason, when not distorted by prejudice nor blinded by passion, leads to God, and that some of the greatest saints that ever lived have been at the same time the greatest philosophers and the profoundest theologians ; and no less conspicuous for learning than for sanctity.

[1] Though marvellously precious is the gift of reason, it is nevertheless surpassed by that of free-will, which is even a more resplendent reflection of God in the human soul. The magnitude of this endowment is well expressed by Dr. W. G. Ward : " Each of us possesses true liberty ; in other words, each one possesses *what might have seemed the inalienable prerogative of God*, in being (as it is expressed) a self-originating principle of causation. Each one of us then is entrusted with the charge of that most precious deposit—his own natural character, his own permanent and eternal interest " (*Nature and Grace*, p. 317).

It is certain, of course, that true and solid sanctity has its root in the will, and not in the intellect. Anyone who can, at all times and under all circumstances, exclaim *sincerely and from his heart*—"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," is in very truth a saint. For sanctity is nothing more than the complete and perfect conformity between the created will of man and the uncreated and eternal will of God. Hence, on Christmas night, the angelic hosts, after singing "Glory to God in the highest," went on to proclaim "peace to men on earth"—not to men of great influence and position; not to men of great wealth and intellect, but "peace to men of GOOD WILL" (Luke ii. 14). "Who possesses a good will," says St. Augustine, "possesses all things."

Still, while admitting all this, we must not lose sight of the fact that the will is not an absolutely independent power. It does not, nay, it cannot, unaided, originate a single effort. It can no more stir without a motive than the sails of a windmill can revolve in a dead calm. We teach, as all Catholic theologians and philosophers, that the will of man is free. Truly. But free to do what? Free to act without an impulse? No; without an impulse it can never put forward the slightest effort of any kind. Its freedom consists in the *liberty of choice.* It may choose between two or more motives. It may follow this one rather than that; it may prefer the less worthy rather than the more worthy, or set aside a thousand for the sake of one; but to dispense with motive altogether is impossible. Then what faculty, we may ask with some degree of interest, supplies the motives, or the motive power, to stir up the lethargic will?

What is the faculty which spurs and whips on the will to vigorous action? The intellect; or, in other words, reason.

Reason places before the mind certain motives, and it is only when stimulated by these motives that the will is enabled to exert itself at all. Irrational animals and insects need no such special appeal, of course, because they act, not by reason, but by instinct. An example or two will make this clear.

A bee, without any consciousness of the beneficial results of its industry, will collect honey with infinite pains, and construct the most perfect hexagonal cells for its reception; so, too, a bird will build the most exquisite nest; and a spider spin a faultless web. But they labour without any freely directed or conscious intention. Instinct is their sole guide. Hence they require no instruction, and no experience, but execute their various tasks as perfectly the first time they perform them as the last. Man is quite differently circumstanced. He is a helpless creature till reason dawns. In infancy he is so dependent upon others that he would inevitably perish if left to himself. He will not and cannot exert himself or make the slightest effort till reason, at last, like a kind monitor, takes him in hand.

Again, whether bees are fed artificially or not, they will continue to gather honey and construct their cells with equal industry, because instinct is indiscriminating. Not so, man. If he hungers he will labour; yes—*to obtain bread;* but if he have all his wants supplied he will not impose upon himself any needless and unpleasant task.

We must all have noticed that men are found who will labour and toil, and suffer and endure,

and brace themselves up to the most herculean tasks ; but *never without a motive.* As the possession of free-will enables them to choose between motives, so the possession of intelligence deters them from acting in the absence of motive.

Gaze over the far-stretching earth. Behold how men toil ; and wonder as you behold ! Go where we will, the same strange scene meets our eye, and repeats itself again and again in every clime. In the continent of Europe ; in distant Australia ; beneath the burning, blistering sun of the Tropics ; amid the eternal snows and piercing winds of the frozen North ; in fact, wherever human foot has trod, and wherever men have penetrated, there is sowing and reaping, buying and selling, bartering and bargaining, and toiling and moiling and sweating. The buzz of machinery, the whirl of wheels, and the rush of steam everywhere fill the air. Yet, among all these millions of active, energetic, slaving men, there is not one who is not acting under the influence of some motive. Not one arm is raised ; not one muscle contracts ; not one head throbs ; not " one brow is wet with honest sweat," but in response to some mental picture of gains to be won, or pains to be warded off, or love to be indulged.

Ask old farmer Giles why he tills his fields, and breaks up the stubborn clods, and scatters the grain in the newly-turned furrows, while heaven and earth are in contention, and bluff Boreas is stalking over the land, plucking at his grey locks, and taking liberties with his loose jerkin and flaunting smock-frock. Is it because he finds pleasure in the work itself ? No, for he will tell you that the labour is hard ; that the winds have no pity on his weather-beaten form ; and that

the chill rains and the angry storms beat upon him and flout him without mercy all the day long. But he endures it all for the sake of the harvest. It is the hope of reward that makes, what is in itself repugnant and distasteful, sweet and pleasant. Or enter into any of the great shops in London, Dublin, Paris or Berlin. There we may watch both men and women, week in, week out, from morning till night, standing behind the counters, and waiting in readiness to serve all who chance to enter—displaying their goods, and tempting the unwary to buy. Consider their behaviour. If they grow weary and sick of heart they must not let it be noticed ; if inwardly annoyed and irritated by the unreasonableness or the exactions of purchasers they must restrain themselves and hide their anger under a bland smile and a suave manner, for else their trade would suffer. Observe, further, that they are at their post early in the morning, and remain there all day. They must sacrifice their time ; they must give up their liberty ; they must control their tempers and exercise an infinite patience. Their position and occupation require it. And all this they actually do, and do willingly, and why ? For the sake of the Kingdom of God ? For the sake of an unfading crown ? No ! For such motives few would do as much. It is for the sake of twenty-five or thirty shillings a week ! And they who work not for gain, work through fear of pain.

Many a poor wretch would gladly lie down and rest, but poverty, with all its attendant evils, forces him to take up his spade and shovel, and set to work again. Hunger is a hard master. It goads on the most reluctant, and forces even those who are really unfit for work to labour still. And

to these two great motive powers we must add a third—*i.e.*, the incentive of affection, the strongest of all. "*Omnia vincit amor*," and "*Amator amicæ mancipium*," are proverbs recognised as true by all the world.

When tender love burns in two hearts, and binds men together, who can measure its influence? On occasions when a man would stir neither hand nor foot for his own advantage, how often will he rouse himself into action for very love of the wife of his bosom, whose sorrowful upturned eyes and beseeching looks he is powerless to resist! How many a mother, too, otherwise careless and deaf to all persuasion, will, at the prayer of her children, apply herself to the most arduous tasks. Her strong affection for them becomes a principle of untold strength. She will court every danger, risk death itself, and attempt even the impossible, in order to succour and safeguard those whom she so loves! She will count her sufferings even a joy, if only they enable her to bring the necessary food and warmth to her starving young.[1]

Thus every reasonable creature who wilfully suffers and toils does so for the sake of one of these three great motives: (1) For desire of gain; (2) through dread of pain; (3) for the sake of love.

[1] The strength of maternal love in the human animal is wonderfully nearly approached by the parental instinct in irrational beings. Thus, "swallows will fly into burning houses to save their young. When a young whale is harpooned, the mother will not desert it while it lives. If polar bears are compelled, when chased, to leave their young, they presently return to look for them, and shed (according to Brehm) great tears, and swim round the coast for several days in their distress. Many animals try to draw the attention of the pursuer from their young to themselves" (see H. Höffding's *Psychology*).

The soldier who fights, fights for gain of some kind. It may not be for silver or gold. He may be no mercenary. It may be for glory, or for fame; or, like Napoleon I. and renowned Alexander, for empire and a throne; but some motive must urge him on. So it is with the artist and the poet, the judge and the barrister, the politician, the physician, the musician, and all others, down to the common bagman and rag and bone merchant. Each applies himself in his respective sphere of life, but always in obedience to some impulse, always by reason of some motive presented before the mind by the intellect. It may be wealth, or it may be fame; it may be ambition, or it may be greed; it may be pleasure, which the mere exercise of power yields; or it may be, to be spoken of and lauded by posterity. It may be any one of these, or any combination of them, or all of them together; but a motive there must be, or all hard labour must cease. And, however varied, and even contradictory these motives may appear, they may all be reduced to one of the three classes enumerated above.

Without such motives all human energy would be paralysed, and the great pulse of human life would stop. This much must appear perfectly obvious to anyone who seriously considers the ways and doings of men. The important and practical point, however, is to apply this truth to the spiritual and supernatural life.

Man's primary duty in this world is to sanctify his soul, and to fit himself for an eternal throne of glory in heaven. This is no child's play! It means downright hard work, constant application, and concentrated attention. It involves many a severe struggle, many a hard-contested battle. The

unum necessarium of the Scriptures is not to be attained without much self-sacrifice, serious efforts and repeated victories over self. Yet in spiritual things, as in temporal things, men will not labour nor deny themselves without a motive. A life of virtue is as impossible without an adequate inducement as is a life of hard physical labour.

Sanctity supposes a certain definite line of conduct. Conduct is made up of a series of particular acts ; each particular act[1] in the series demands a special motive. Ergo, etc.

Now, do supernatural motives exist ? Are incitements to virtue arising from fear, desire and love, to be found in the order of grace as of nature ? Are there stimuli to help us, and to urge us on in the spiritual conflict, as in the physical ? Evidently : and, what is more, they are immeasurably more cogent, forcible and weighty than any which we have to influence us in the affairs of this world.

What racking pain, what loathsome disease, what fell disgrace or burning shame, can compare with the unending tortures and superhuman agonies of hell ? What reward that the world has to offer us, whether it come in the form of wealth or station, or fame or influence, or health or beauty, can approach in grandeur or magnificence the imperishable rewards of heaven ? What motive founded on the love of father or mother, brother or sister, wife or children, husband or lover, can come even within a measurable distance

[1] We refer here, of course, not to the *actus hominis*, but to the *actus humanus :* not to what the Germans call " Die Thätigkeit des Menschen," but to " Die Menschliche Thätigkeit "; *i.e.*, " ' Actus qui *voluntate deliberata* procedunt,' ut dicunt theologi ;" and which alone are meritorious.

of the ineffable love of the Infinite Goodness, the uncreated Beauty, and the Divine and everlasting Truth?

Furnished with motives such as faith provides, we may surely expect almost any degree of sanctity of even the most pusillanimous. Who, indeed, with such incitements before him, will find it impossible, or even difficult, to follow the path of perfection, however strait and steep and thorn-strewn? If men so labour for the bread that perishes, surely we have a right to conclude that they will be far more ready to labour for that which endureth for ever! If a merely earthly love will set a man's heart on fire, fill it with the courage as well as the strength of a lion, and incite him to deeds of heroism and daring surpassing all belief, what an immeasurably greater effect should the immeasurably higher love of God produce! Calm, plain reason itself will unhesitatingly declare that the eternal must outweigh the temporal, and the things of heaven all possible things of earth.

Undoubtedly. Yet we shall be reminded that the facts are against us. The reader will simply point to the men and women who make up the bulk of the fifteen hundred millions of people now inhabiting the world.[1] He will say: See! They are full of worldly ambition and earthly aims; they do far more for the sake of temporal than for the sake of eternal gains. Will not many a poor devil (does he deserve a better name?) toil all day to escape poverty, who will neither confess his sins nor humble his pride, to escape even hell itself? Is not the promise of a handful of gold

[1] The total population of the world, according to *The Times*, is about 1,455,933,000 (*vide* 25th October, 1887).

or silver often a more powerful stimulus than the promise of the empyrean heaven and all that it contains? That hundreds of thousands stand in greater awe of the police and of imprisonment than of all the furies of hell combined; and that they will do, and are doing vastly more for earthly lovers than they will even so much as attempt for the love of God, are propositions almost as indisputable as that two and two make four.

We do not deny one word of this indictment which we put into the mouth of the supposed reader. Evidences of its substantial truth are daily before our eyes. Yet our contention remains untouched. The motives for loving God and for leading a life of virtue are, *in themselves*, infinitely stronger than all the motives the world has to offer, even though you were to multiply their number and their intensity throughout all eternity.

Then why in the name of common sense are men not more affected by them? Why, in a word, does that which is immeasurably small outweigh that which is immeasurably great? Why does a withered leaf, or a particle of dust, produce a more palpable effect than all the inestimable treasures in the treasury of God? Why do considerations of time influence more than those of eternity? Why do the promises of man excite and stimulate people more than the promises of God?

The answer is plain. It is not enough that a motive exists, nor even that it is strong with the strength of God. It must, furthermore, be known; it must be duly considered, and in some degree, at all events, appreciated. The great principle underlying the whole difficulty is this, *viz.*, *a motive, however powerful and however irresistible in*

itself, is simply no motive at all to the mind that fails to master it and grasp its real significance.

As Goethe so justly observes :—

Was man nicht versteht, besitzt man nicht.

What doctrine is better calculated in itself to scare men from sin than the doctrine of eternal punishment ? Yet who will reckon the millions who (while professing to believe in it) yet sin, and sin, and sin, without the slightest fear ! Yes, men who tremble at the thought of earthly pains, men who are intensely apprehensive of the evils of imprisonment and transportation ; and who grow deadly pale at the threat of the gallows or the guillotine, or even of the lash, are not afraid of the fires that are never quenched, and dare to make light of the anger of an irresistible God ! But why ? Well, because to them they are simply not realities. To such as these, indeed, hell is nothing more than a painted fire, and its fiercest terrors but the foolish fancies of a diseased imagination. They cannot see the glow of the furnace ; they cannot hear the shrieks of the lost ; they cannot feel the gnawing of the worm that never dies ; therefore hell is a figment, nothing more.

They may confess the doctrine of eternal punishment, but they do so without understanding what it is they confess. They neither dwell upon it, nor familiarise themselves with it. Such thoughts, in fact, are found to be too troublesome and disturbing, so best allowed to sleep. Hence, from want of reflecting upon them, men cease to be influenced ; and weaker and weaker these great motives become, till worldly minded people end at last by being affected by nothing but what they can either see, or hear, or feel, or actually experi-

ence for themselves. The invisible world, though far more real and firmly established than any object we now gaze upon, speedily becomes in their eyes just exactly as though it had no existence whatever; and thus the truth of the old adage, "Out of sight, out of mind," receives its confirmation and exemplification.

Here we put our finger, as it were, on the very seat of the disease which is destroying the spiritual life of the world, and sowing the seeds of eternal misery. "The just man lives by faith;" the unjust by sense. The man of God has the eyes of his soul open to contemplate heavenly things; the man of the world sees only with the eyes of his body, and is, essentially, of the earth, earthy.

The saints, even the greatest of them, were formed from the same clay as ourselves; their minds and intellects were created on the same plan as our own. Hence it is abundantly clear that the motives that influenced them so strongly would influence us equally *if we saw them as they did.* The self-same motives that induced the great heroes of the Church to fling to the winds riches and honours and earthly delights, and to esteem them all as dung, for the sake of Christ, exist at the present moment in all their pristine force and cogency, undiminished by time, unaffected by age. Yea, more: they not only exist, but they will influence us as they influenced others; but always on one condition—on condition that we perceive them, realise them, drink in their meaning and thoroughly imbue ourselves with a sense of their intense reality and objective truth.

Like Bartimeus of old, the world sits by the wayside, blind and unconscious, while Jesus Christ is passing close by. Would that, like that poor

son of Timeus, it were aware of its blindness, and would cry out, as he did, refusing to hold his peace : " Rabboni, grant that I may see " (Mark x. 51). " Lord, that my eyes be opened " (Matt. xx. 33). Then Christ would work the same miracle again that He worked by the walls of Jericho well-nigh two thousand years ago, and the world would receive its sight, and at last realise its position, and amend.

CHAPTER IV.

ON PAIN, CONSIDERED AS A MOTIVE.

"Thy pains, once gone over into yesterday, become joys to thee. Besides thou knowest not what heavenly blessedness and indispensable sanative virtue was in them; thou shalt only know it after many days, when thou art wiser!"—T. CARLYLE, *Past and Present*, p. 133.

As we have already remarked, man is generally defined "a rational animal." Now, being in part animal and in part rational, he sometimes acts as an irrational creature; that is to say, by habit, instinct, passion, and unreasonable and unreasoning impulses, and sometimes like an intelligent being, with judgment, reflection and forethought. When man is true to his higher nature, and under the dominion of reason, he will act only in obedience to some motive or another, be it what it may. That is to say, man, *as man*, can never exercise his free-will in any way whatever without a determining cause.

Though these determining causes are most various and most numerous, the most general and widespread of all are those which arise from the fear of pain. The dread of pain and suffering may be the lowest and most unworthy motive with which a person can be inspired. This we will not deny. Our contention is, that it is the commonest and the most universal. Whereas some motives

appeal only to high and noble natures, this appeals to all, and will influence even such as are too degraded and animal to be reached by any other.

Fear begins to assert its power at the earliest age. A mother instructs her little children, and instils into their tender minds principles of obedience and reverence, by threats of pain, as the penalty for any violation of her commands. To be put in a corner ; to be deprived of some favourite dish ; to be sent off to bed while the sun is still high in the heavens, and without the customary caress ; or in cases of more serious faults, to be whipped with the birch-rod, constitute motives strengthening and bracing up the will to act in accordance with what is right and just. Even at the most tender age, suffering and disgrace are employed to deter the would-be offender from the commission of evil.

Years pass. The child grows up to be a boy. His will strengthens, his passions develop, and he is full of animal spirits which need control. He is sent off to school. Here he has certain work to do, and not always congenial or agreeable work. He is expected to rise early, and to sit still, for many hours a day, on a hard bench in the study hall. He must apply his mind to his books ; and construe, and parse, and translate Latin and Greek, French and German. He must puzzle over geometry and algebra and chemistry, and commit to memory history, literature, geography and much else, which entail labour and trouble. In a word, he has many a hard duty to perform, many a difficult task to fulfil, which are not to his taste. What supplies him with the requisite motive ? Well, there may be many things, but one of these, and the *only* one we are now concerned with, is

punishment. He will be detained in the study-place during play-time ; he will be forced to remain at his desk while his companions are cricketing, or bathing, or skating ; or else, if the fault be a serious one, he may even be feruled or flogged. Thus the cane, and the birch-rod, and the ferule, are held out as incentives to virtuous conduct. The fear of punishment, and the dread of suffering, will supply a boy with a motive, and generally a very effective motive, to restrain his inclination, and to brace himself up to carry through his allotted task, even when tedious, monotonous and uninteresting. In this way he is taught to control his lower propensities by the exercise of reason, and to hold the mastery over his passions, and to be guided in all his actions by principle rather than by inclination.

And, just as the child passes from the nursery to the college, so, a few years later, the youth passes from the college into the wide world. The schoolmaster is no longer there with his stern voice and menacing rod. True. But the threat of punishment still hangs over him. In place of the schoolmaster he finds the State, the machinery of the law—in a word, the Executive.

Certain social duties are to be attended to ; property and life must be safeguarded, and order maintained within these realms. To secure all this the Government has recourse to fines, incarceration, transportation and to executions by rope or guillotine. Men hear of plank beds, and bread and water diet, and of so many lashes with the cat ; and when higher and nobler motives fail, the thought of these things supplies them with strong arguments for leading decent, honest and sober lives.

How powerful and really efficacious such motives are, no one can doubt who seriously reflects what a panic there was a few years ago in London, when a disorganisation seemed probable among the police. Citizens were heard asking one another in alarm: "If the police fail us; if they cease to patrol the streets, what will become of the city? What will become of the miles and miles of shops and stores filled with untold treasures and riches?" It never occurred to anyone that the mere sense of honour, of justice, of virtue among the roughs would act as a sufficient restraint; or that an exhortation to keep God's Commandments would save their valuables from the hands of the multitude if once let loose upon them without rein or bridle. Yet what is that but to confess that men, who will listen to no other argument, are controlled and restrained by fear of pain?

Indeed, it is nature's method as well as man's. Violate a law of nature, and nature will punish the offender. A little child is taught to balance itself, and to walk upright, by the pain it suffers in its repeated falls; so, also, it will resist the attractions of the bright dancing flames, and learn, in course of time, to keep a respectful distance from the fire—but not until after it has once or twice burnt its fingers. So, again, excess in eating is punished by inconvenience and interior aches, and the experience of such after-effects causes the greedy gourmand to put some sort of bridle on his appetite.

Though instances might be multiplied indefinitely, enough has been said to show the dread of punishment exists among men, as a very real and practical motive; and that the menace of temporal pain does actually exercise a marked and

most appreciable influence on their lives and conduct, restraining, controlling, and directing them at every turn.

Now, what we wish to ask is this: How comes it that this dread of pain, which is inherent in our very nature; which accompanies us through life; which checks us as children; which influences us as youths; and which restrains us, even as fully grown men, should suddenly fail of its effects, and lose all its power so soon as it is transferred to what is spiritual and supernatural? Why, in a word, do the threats of the parent, the schoolmaster, and the civil government, in turn, inspire a respect and a fear which the threats of God Himself are often unable to excite? Why do so many, who shrink from the puny sufferings that man can inflict, feel no fear of the inextinguishable fires of hell?

This is contrary to reason, and the very acme of folly. If we fear disgrace before men; if we shrink from imprisonment in a dark, comfortless cell, far from friends and companions; if we shudder at the thought of a violent death upon the scaffold, why do we not grow pale and sicken with dread, when by grievous sin we have rendered ourselves liable to a punishment, compared with which the fiercest of earthly agonies must appear tolerable; if not positively sweet and delightful? If the remembrance of the infamous gallows-tree, and of the hangman's thongs strapping the murderer's limbs together; the fixing of the dreaded cord about his neck; the drawing of the bolt, and then the awful drop, followed by eternal silence—if that remembrance is generally sufficient to stem the fiercest torrent of anger, and to subdue and force back the most violent desire of revenge, how

is it that the infinitely greater agony of damnation is so little able to deter men from mortal sin, even under much less provocation ?

Pause for a moment to consult sane reason. Reason clearly lays down the following axioms : First, of two pains the milder should be preferred ; secondly, where two pains are of equal intensity the briefer should always be chosen rather than the more prolonged ; thirdly, an uncertain and merely probable punishment which may perhaps never be inflicted is to be risked rather than one which is certain, inevitable and unerring.

These, I take it, are self-evident truisms. Let us now apply them to the punishment of sin : to the pains of the damned. In all three cases we shall find that hell ought to be feared immeasurably more than any possible earthly calamity.

First, *A less suffering is to be preferred to a greater ;* consequently, not merely the ordinary trials of life, but the worst disgrace, the fiercest torment, the deepest grief, the most unbearable loss, should be preferred to sin which renders us worthy of hell fire. For what are all earth's torments compared with hell ? Just nothing at all. What is the accumulation of every possible earthly misfortune when contrasted with the pain of unquenchable fire ? A thing of no account. To be bound hand and foot by infernal chains ; to be cast into interior darkness ; to be salted with fire ; to witness nothing but tortures ; to hear nothing but weeping and gnashing of teeth ; to be perpetually gnawed by the worm that dieth not ; to cry for ever like the rich man, *crucior in hac flamma,* and to receive no consolation or rest ; to be deprived of every good, and to be oppressed with every evil, such is a feeble state-

ment of the agonies of hell. And if this be hell, surely to remember it ought to inspire us with vastly greater fear than any other consideration whatsoever. For since no torment or disgrace we can experience in this life can at all approach in intensity the torment and disgrace of damnation, we should be prepared to endure anything and everything rather than incur the risk of losing our souls by mortal sin.

This would be absolutely true, even if hell were but temporal and destined to last but a few score of centuries ; but we know that when once in hell, then " time shall be no more." This brings us to the second law, *viz., Where the intensity of two states of suffering is equal, a shorter term of suffering is to be preferred to a longer one.*

Now compare the duration of hell's torments with these of this life. What do I say ?—" compare "? A hopeless task ! We cannot institute such a comparison. No comparison is so much as possible. How are we to compare that which ends with that which never ends ? How compare time with eternity ? To suffer for a thousand, or a hundred thousand, or even a million years ; ah ! of that we may possibly form some faint notion ; but even a million years is not eternity. It is no fraction of eternity. If deducted from eternity that limitless duration would not be in any way lessened. A million certainly represents a gigantic number. Even with the best will in the world we can in no way grasp its full significance or adequately realise its contents. Merely to count a million would occupy a considerable time. If we were to begin counting, one, two, three, four, five, etc., each consecutive second, and continue the task all day and all night without interruption,

three entire days and nights would pass before we could reach a million. Yet after as many million of centuries have passed as there are leaves on the trees eternity will still be beginning. Let a single atom represent a million million centuries of duration, and then reflect that after as many million million of centuries have passed away as there are particles of matter in earth, sun and moon, and all the stars, eternity will still be only just beginning—in fact, *always* beginning ; never half-way through, never a third, or a hundredth, or a millionth part of its way through, but ever beginning, ever young. No man can understand this. No one with his puny mind can look into eternal futurity, endless and infinite ! Man boasts of doing many things in these days. He will measure the depths of ocean, the diameter of the earth, its orbit round the sun, the distance of even the fixed stars. One thing, however, he cannot do ; one thing exceeds all his power and genius : and that is, to measure eternity, to realise the duration of hell ; since that would be to measure the measureless, to fathom the unfathomable. There is, indeed, but one thing more awful than the pain of hell, and that is its duration. If man is capable of being frightened into obedience by anything, surely one would have thought it would be by the dogma of hell. All other terrors sink into insignificance when compared with it, and dwindle away into nothing. And yet, so weak has faith grown that, in these days, there are multitudes more afraid of a policeman's baton ! Thousands stand in greater fear of a constable than of all the terrors of the bottomless pit. The first does actually exercise some little restraint upon them ; the second exercises none. If men,

like the brute beast, had no sense, and were unable to balance pain with pain ; if they possessed no means of comparing the temporal with the eternal, we might better understand their lives of criminal indulgence, and watch with less surprise the thousands ripening for hell, till at last they drop off, one by one, to feed the quenchless fires. But that *reasonable* men, so keenly sensitive to temporal pains, should be so indifferent to eternal pains, is veritably a mystery.

Let us now, in the third place, contrast the human and Divine punishments from the point of view of their inevitableness. Sufferings in this world are not absolutely certain of overtaking us A criminal may not be discovered by the minions of the law ; a prisoner may escape from his confinement ; disease or fever may rob even the scaffold of its victim, and set the cruellest murderer free from the hands of human justice. The threats of pain and punishment on this side of the grave are even accompanied by some degree of uncertainty. But there is no uncertainty in the case of the eternal punishment reserved for the unrepentant sinner. He cannot escape from the hands of God. Nothing can liberate him from the dungeons of hell. He may be as clever and as cunning, as bold and as daring as possible, but all his cunning and cleverness is but childish folly in the eyes of God, and can avail him nothing. The damned sinner cannot even destroy his existence as, in this world, he may destroy his physical life. No escape lies open to him. When God condemns, there is none to deliver.

In this world we hear of men, not merely fearing ignominy and shame, but fearing them to such a degree that they will even take their own lives

in order to escape. The example of the informer Pigott, who rather than face an infuriated public blew out his brains, is but one out of countless thousands of similar instances. There is no such means of escaping the penalty of unrepented sin. So soon as a man consents to mortal sin hell is as certainly his portion, so long as the sin remains upon him, as that there is a God in heaven. He must face the disgrace, the shame, the pains and torments, without rest, without sympathy, without hope, and without interruption, for ever and ever and ever.

Who is there bearing this in mind can so far forget himself as to violate a command of God? As St. Augustine so truly observes: "One who commits mortal sin must have lost either his faith or his reason; he must be an infidel or a lunatic; *i.e.*, either he has no faith, and does not believe in the existence of hell, or else, if he believes and still sins, he must be out of his mind." Thus, in the sinner, folly reaches its lowest depths, and can go no further —it has sounded the basest string of stupidity.

If we compare the punishment of sin with other evils either (1) in intensity, or (2) in duration, or (3) in the certainty of its infliction, we find that it exceeds them all in an immeasurable degree. And this is important to remember; for as one nail drives out another, so will a greater fear drive out a lesser. Instances of this truth are constantly arising even in the daily occurrences of life. A traveller in the dense African forests trembles if he suddenly finds himself face to face with a ferocious beast; and would naturally fly from it with all speed; but if a yet greater danger menace him he will turn round, put on a bold front and face the lesser evil. As the greatest of England's

poets says : " I would shun a bear, but if my flight lay towards the raging sea, I would meet the bear i' the mouth."

So, too, many a task imposed by God may seem hard and difficult to weak nature ; but when it resolves itself into the necessity of choosing between humble submission to the labours and trials of life, or passing an eternity in the region of the damned—then no room is left for hesitation or debate. As the author of the *Imitation of Christ* so pertinently says : " To many this seems a hard saying : ' Deny thyself, take up thy cross and follow Jesus ;' but much harder will it be to hear those last words, ' Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire ' " (Book ii.).

Men sin in order to escape a momentary pain, and so expose themselves to eternal pain. Some find it too much to be asked to abstain on Fridays ; to fast in Lent ; to deny themselves a sensual delight ; or to leave their amusing novel or their stroll in the park, in order to hear a Mass of obligation ; and for the sake of the trifling satisfaction and pleasure that sins afford, they scruple not to wreck their whole future, to offend God, and thereby to place themselves in imminent danger of actual damnation.

So lightly are the judgments of God esteemed that men in their fatal blindness seem to think it hardly worth their while to stir hand or foot to escape them. Consider the prevalence of drunkenness, impurity, cursing, swearing, anger, vindictiveness and neglect of Mass on Sundays. Yet, who would deliberately reduce himself to the bestial state of drunkenness who fully realised the hell of the drunkard? Who, for the sake of momentary unclean pleasure, or for the sake of

indulging anger, revenge or ill-feeling, would calmly submit to the penalty of endless torments? "The cause of all our ills," said Pius IX., "is that no one now preaches on hell."

But, alas! men do not, and will not reflect. Of the *present* moment they think, not of the *future*. It is the interest of the passing hour that engrosses them, that engages their thoughts and occupies their minds; what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and how they shall clothe themselves, and what sort of hat or bonnet will suit them best; and how they may best divert and amuse themselves, and kill the fleeting hour; such are the lines along which their thoughts, like shadows, flitter to and fro. Or else they are wholly given up to the interests of their business or profession, or to seeking how to make a fortune, to better their social condition, to increase their resources, and to enlarge their income. Matters, in a word, which have to do with their temporary life, and not with their eternal; with this world rather than with the next.

Hence if men commit sin and defile their souls with hideous crimes, it is not because God leaves them without sufficient motives to resist temptation, but simply because they refuse to have recourse to such motives. God has provided the strongest and most powerful incentives; but they are thrown away, and their influence is utterly lost, because men will not ponder over them nor keep them before their minds. While the infallible Spirit of God declares that they "who think of their last end shall never sin," so, on the other hand, He assures us that "with desolation is the whole world laid desolate because there is no man who considereth in his heart."

CHAPTER V.

HEROES: TRUE AND FALSE.

"It is the joy of man's heart to admire where he can; nothing so lifts him from all his mean imprisonments, were it but for moments, as true admiration."—T. CARLYLE.

MEN are readily impressed by whatever is grand and noble and generous. Even those who are timid and spiritless themselves cannot help paying an inward tribute of admiration and respect to the high courage and daring self-sacrifice they witness in others. In fact, a great soul and a noble character command respect and attention wherever they are found, whether in Church or State. Hence the world has its heroes just as the Church has hers. It points with pride to its Wellingtons, its Nelsons, and its Livingstones; points to them as to men who have deserved well of their country, and done much and dared much for the public good; whether it be by conquering hostile bands, discovering unknown regions, or opening out new channels for commerce and industry. Their praises are sounded far and wide; their names become household words, and while living they are fêted and applauded wheresoever they go. We do not wish to detract one iota from their fair fame. On the contrary, all honour be to them for their enterprise and daring. All we

are anxious to do is to point out that these are the heroes of this world, and that all their greatness is but small and contemptible when compared with that of the heroes whom the Church commemorates, *viz.*, the glorious Saints of God. These alone will be found worthy of unmixed admiration.

Indeed, the heroes of this earth are but the heroes of a day. Their fame endures but for an hour. Vanity is written upon all their works, and the mould that covers their bones will soon also hide their glory from us. History may, indeed, chronicle their deeds; nations may prate and prattle of them for a period; but they themselves are passed away. Gone! Aye, gone where neither the praise nor the blame of men can follow them; gone where neither flattery can elate nor calumny disturb. Who was once so famed as the great Alexander, King of Macedon? Two thousand years ago the whole earth was ringing with his praises. Where is he now? Who now thinks or speaks of this renowned soldier, who subdued the Greeks, defeated the Persians, and conquered Syria and Egypt, Parthia and Media, and India, and then sighed for other lands to conquer? . . . Where is Cæsar, that mighty general and warrior, who led his victorious troops through Gaul, and invaded Britain, and made himself master of the whole Roman world, and entered triumphantly into Rome with all the glory of a Dictator, and who was styled by his enthusiastic countrymen "Father of his nation"? What is now left of all his greatness? What, in the words of Holy Scripture, hath pride profited him?

Or to come to more modern times. Where is the most notorious man that last century pro-

duced, Napoleon the First ? Where is that marvellous genius, who by sheer force of character raised himself from a position of obscurity to the very highest pinnacle of worldly glory and ambition : he who routed the best armies of Europe, and placed almost the entire civilised world under his feet ? who had himself crowned Emperor of France, and King of Italy, and parcelled out kingdoms among his brothers as though they had been provinces ; and made his very name a terror if not a curse in every land ?

Where are these, and the hundreds and thousands of lesser fame ; the mighty, the rich, the powerful, the prosperous, the wise ? Where are they who once kept the world in awe ; they at whose voice nations stood still and held their breath, and at whose presence the earth itself was troubled ? Whither have they fled ? Whither indeed ? . . . Their bodies have long since mingled with the dust ; but their souls, their spiritual and imperishable souls ? where are *they* now ? Where ? I ask, and the echo murmurs back a dismal "*where ?*" That is, indeed, a matter we cannot determine. This alone we may say, and let this suffice : they have entered into a land where pride, and ambition, and lust of conquest, and earthly grandeur, are no passports to eternal glory. They dwell in regions where mere human wisdom and cunning are powerless to aid, and where humility and charity, and patience and forbearance, and purity and innocence profit more than all the treasures that the earth contains. No ! the heroes of this world have little in them of what is truly great.

To whom then may this epithet be more justly applied ? To those surely who have conquered

not kingdoms, but themselves; who have vanquished and subdued not peoples and nations, but their own rebellious appetites, unruly passions and wayward propensities. In one word, they alone deserve the name of hero who have fought the good fight, under the banner of the Cross, and emulated the heroic life and sublime example of Him who was crucified thereon. The noblest characters in all history are the virgins, the confessors and the martyrs; in short, the saints of God, whose names are emblazoned in the book of life. *Their* glory shall never fade! It is as imperishable as heaven itself. It is not dependent upon the fickle judgment of a silly, fastidious world. It is neither made nor marred by the breath of the multitude, nor by the applause of the masses. It is as far removed beyond the reach of envious tongues as heaven is above earth. It is more enduring than the very ground upon which we tread, more firmly rooted and established than the very foundations of the world; for these shall one day crumble away, but it will remain. The stars of heaven shine not with so bright a lustre; the noonday sun itself is not so resplendent as the least of God's saints: for all these mighty orbs shall grow dim, and their fires shall be spent, but the souls of the just are in the hands of God, and their thrones are established for ever and ever, and nothing shall ever come to dim their matchless glory, or to pass so much as a passing shadow over their beauty and unclouded happiness. But so long as God is God, so long shall they exult in His possession and bask in the brightness of His presence.

These are our models and our examples. These alone are worthy of our imitation. But, alas!

how few amongst us are making any serious and sustained effort to resemble them. With what little earnestness we struggle, and how weak and spasmodic are all our endeavours. No wonder then that the chasm which separates us from the champions of the faith yawns so wide and deep. Yet, considering that both we and they were made for precisely the same sublime end, the contrast between us and them is terrible to contemplate. That a vast difference really exists is clear. That there must be some adequate cause to account for this difference is equally clear. Our first duty, therefore, must be to find it out. We must get a distinct view of it, that we may then proceed at once to remove the obstacle from our path. The saints run along the way of God's commandments; we can scarcely keep our footing. They advance with a giant's strides; we do but totter and fall, and rise only to fall again, like infants just beginning to walk. Why is this? We must strive to search out the genuine cause, for unless we can, as it were, lay our finger on the sore, and say "there is the root of the malady," we may hardly dare to hope to apply a suitable remedy, and all our labour will be in vain.

What reason shall we assign? Perhaps, kind readers, you will reply: it is entirely due to our surroundings; it is all owing to the cankered state of society at the present day. The world is so wicked, so steeped in every form of vice and villainy; even people who are not downright iniquitous are yet so worldly, so selfish, so indifferent: then there is so much bad example, bad literature, bad plays and immodest representations. The seeds of infidelity, of atheism, of agnosticism and of scepticism are sown broadcast up and

down the land by means of papers, periodicals, books, pamphlets, reviews and magazines. The very air is impregnated with a thousand noxious vapours of false doctrines. Why, every breeze comes laden with the murmurs of some new doubt or some fresh sophism, against the faith. It is hard, you will urge, to live through all this unaffected and unscathed. To exercise heroic virtue amid such a deluge of evil were as impossible as to live in the depths of the ocean and not to be drowned, or to walk through the midst of a fire and not to be scorched by the flames. But woe to us if we flatter ourselves with such vain, if specious, excuses. The true reason of our spiritual lethargy is not the general state of the world, bad though it undoubtedly is, for history gives the lie to such an assumption at once. It informs us that there have been saints, and great saints, living at times and in places much worse than ours ; yea, even amidst idolaters and pagans, and all the corruptions and dissoluteness of morals that disgraced the effete civilisations of ancient Greece and Rome. To seek to excuse our want of fervour on the plea of our surroundings and the corruptions of the world is to put a bandage on our eyes, and wilfully to court deception. This is but a baseless excuse, an unworthy pretext.

Then you will, perhaps, exclaim : " It is all the fault of my profession, or my trade, or the peculiar nature of my employment, or of my position in life. What scope have I, forsooth, for the exercise of heroic virtue ? How can I attain to true sanctity while discharging my ordinary and very homely and commonplace duties ?" Such representations may, at first

glance, seem more plausible ; but here, again, history itself testifies in the most emphatic way that sanctity, even in its more heroic forms, is absolutely independent of position and station, and may be attained in any rank and condition. It proves for our encouragement and consolation, not merely that there *may* be, but that there *have actually been*, saints and chosen servants of God in every possible walk of life, from that of the Great St. Louis, King of France, ruling over a mighty empire, and swaying the destinies of an entire nation, down to that of a St. Benedict Lábré, clothed in rags and tatters, and begging from door to door a crust of bread for the love of God. Between these two canonised saints how great is the contrast ! Yet every intermediate stage has its representatives among the saints of God's Church : yes, kings and queens, princes and princesses, warriors, statesmen, priests, monks, artisans, farm-labourers, servants, paupers, beggars and slaves have all furnished splendid proofs of the ubiquity of Divine grace, and the power of the abiding presence of God in every faithful heart. From this it is clear that the second excuse is no better than the first, and that no more solid justification can be found in one plea than in the other.

Deeper and further must we probe into the subtle windings of the heart and character of the saints if we would search out their secrets and understand the essential distinction between them and ourselves. It is something far more personal and intrinsic than any chance disparity of state or employment. Sanctity itself has little, if anything, to do with what is external. " The Kingdom of God is within you." " All the beauty of

the King's daughter is within," says the Holy Ghost. The difference between one who is, and one who is not a saint, is to be sought not in the things done, but in the manner in which they are done. It is the perfect purity of heart, the uprightness of intention, and the singleness of purpose; or, in other words, the internal disposition of will that marks the saint and separates him from the sinner. The saints did very much what we do; their duties were almost exactly what ours are; but they went about them in a totally different spirit, impelled by a different impulse, and in obedience to a different motive. They measured every act and event of life by a different standard, and directed all their actions, however humble and commonplace, by the maxims of the Gospel, and the teaching of Christ.

Such is a brief and incomplete statement of the difference between a saint and a sinner; but how shall we now account for this internal difference? Whence does it proceed? Well, it appears to me that we may reduce it entirely to one simple cause; and though it be an exceedingly simple one, I believe it will be found influential enough fully to account for the contrast. The ultimate cause of the difference between a saint and a sinner will be found to lie in the difference in the *quality* of their faith. The light of Divine faith illuminating the mind and warming the heart of a true disciple of Christ, is full, bright, clear and transparent; whereas in most of us it is blurred, obscure and dull. It is not that we accept a different doctrine, but that our mode of apprehending it is so different. All Catholics, of course (without exception), profess the self-same truths; the dogmas and definitions of the Catholic Church are as binding upon

us as upon the saints. But how differently they are received! The saints realised their meaning and were intimately conscious of their truth; we seem but vaguely to suspect it. Our belief is all but dead, theirs was ever full of the sap of Divine strength and vigour. We may illustrate our meaning by an example. Thus we are taught the awful doctrine of hell; and firmly do we believe that an eternal punishment of the most agonising kind awaits the commission of even one deliberate mortal sin. Nay, more; we openly and unhesitatingly confess it, and we acknowledge its justice as well as its truth. But in what manner do we bring this most awful fact home to our minds? What is the nature of our belief? Well, we must judge from the effects. Does the thought of hell, when we have deserved it by our sins, make our blood run cold with abject terror? Does it clothe sin with a malice and heinousness that nothing else possesses in our eyes? Does it excite within us a strong revulsion and hatred against sin which surpasses every other hatred? Does the contemplation of those raging fires, and of the bottomless pit, and of the worm that never dies, cause us to fly away from the very shadow of sin as from the jaws of a hissing serpent? Does this thought invest our wills with a giant's strength when wrestling with temptation, and confer firmness and stability upon our holy purpose and good resolutions? Does the doctrine of everlasting damnation, in fine, exercise a practical effect upon our daily lives? If not, if it does nothing of the kind, then what is hell to us but a painted fire? What are all its terrors but the fevered imaginations and insane ravings of a deluded brain? What are its most excruciating

tortures but an idle, empty tale, or a foolish and baseless dream, signifying nothing? It was not in this way that the saints understood the infallible warnings of the Son of God, who holds in His hands the keys of the abyss, and the reins of life and of death. Look, for instance, at St. Jerome in the vast solitude of the Egyptian desert, the companion, as he himself informs us, of scorpions and wild beasts. Consider him clad in his penitential garb of sackcloth and ashes, his cheeks wet with tears, and his eyes red with weeping. In his right hand he grasps a jagged stone, with which he beats his naked breast till the blood flows and trickles freely down to the ground. Why this solitude? Why this life of prayer and penance? We give the answer in his words: "*Ob gehennæ metum tali me carceri damnaveram*"—"Through fear of hell I condemn myself to this lonely prison." So, too, of St. Peter Damian it is stated that the colour would fade away from his cheeks, and the very hair of his head would stand up on end, at the bare remembrance of the eternity of untold pain and anguish. Or, to take another instance. When St. Francis Borgia was one day questioned as to the cause of his excessive gloominess and depression, his all-sufficient reply was: "My meditation this morning was on the judgment of God on impenitent sinners." Even the great St. Paul, who was raised to the third heavens, and whose entire life, from the moment of his conversion, was spent in heroic labours for God, was not without fear. So far from confiding in his good works, he tells us that he "chastised his body, and brought it into subjection, lest having preached to others" he himself might become "a castaway"; that is to say, lest he might be

eternally damned. Yes, to the saints hell bore an awful significance. To them it was a greater reality than the sun shining in the heavens, and more intimately present than the earth upon which they trod; it is only by the sinner and the thoughtless man of the world—by those, in a word, who have most cause to tremble—that it is disregarded, or, perhaps, even made a subject of idle jest or unseemly merriment.

So it is precisely with all other stupendous truths of Divine revelation. What we have remarked concerning the doctrine of hell is quite as true of the doctrine of heaven. Call to mind what we are taught regarding the rewards of the just; read what the Scriptures tell us of Paradise. Its beauty we know is matchless, its glory beyond compare, its joys unknown to earth, its peace surpassing all hope or thought, its happiness inexpressible and unthinkable, and its duration endless and unfailing. Now, observe, we know all this, and we acknowledge all this; and then? Well, then, we fling it all away in a moment, without one pang of remorse, and for the sake of any sinful pleasure or unclean delight. Such is the vividness of our faith! We believe heaven to be all that I have described, and immeasurably more, one instant, and the next we proceed to barter it away without compunction in exchange for some senseless gratification or sordid satisfaction that vanishes almost as soon as it is grasped. Would such a depth of folly and wickedness be likely, yea rather, let us ask, would it be so much as possible, were our faith vigorous and vivid? Alas! what manner of faith is this? Does it deserve the name? Oh! call it by some other word; let us not prostitute language by speak-

ing of this as "faith." Men blame Esau, and declare him to have been a fool because he sold his earthly birthright for a mess of pottage; but Esau was a prodigy of learning, a Solon of wisdom, a perfect Solomon, compared to a Catholic who sells his birthright to the devil for an unclean pleasure or the sensual delight of an hour.

How differently the idea of heaven affected the saints. Listen to St. Teresa, for instance, breaking her heart for the possession of God in the beatific vision, and longing, if she could not die at once and be with Him, at least to suffer more that she might merit more: "*aut mori, aut pati.*" Such value did she set on the least delights of God's eternal kingdom that she used to declare her readiness to remain amid all earthly torments till the end of time, to merit (not heaven, to which she was certainly entitled already), but to merit, were it possible, merely one additional degree of glory there.[1] "If I were asked," she wrote, "which I preferred: to endure *all the trials of the world until the end of it*, and then receive *one slight* degree of additional glory; or *without any suffering of any kind* to enter into glory of a slightly lower degree, I would accept—oh! how willingly!—all those trials for *one* slight degree of fruition in the contemplation of the greatness of God." And so it was in different measure with all the great servants of God. The hope and anticipation of the endless beatitude of heaven shed a glow of happiness and peace over their whole lives, and urged them to deeds of heroic virtue.

Similar considerations may be made concerning our faith in God's love. He is our Creator, our

[1] St. Teresa, *Life*, xxxvii., § 3.

Benefactor, our Father and our nearest and dearest Friend. To Him we must acknowledge we owe, without a single exception, all that we possess and enjoy, in fact all that makes life worth living; and not only all that we enjoy, but the very capacity of love, of happiness and of enjoyment, and the very sensibility to the impressions of joy-provoking causes. This is evidently the case; yet what return of love does this astounding truth awaken within our breasts? It is certainly a most mysterious psychological fact (though unhappily a very common one), that it hardly awakens any.

Let us calmly state the case. Thus we verily believe Him to be the all-powerful and irresistible God, infinitely removed above us, yet so passionately fond of us, and so devoted to our interests, that He goes to the unheard-of lengths of positively dying the most cruel of deaths for our sakes. We acknowledge all this—did we refuse to acknowledge it our conduct would not be so utterly inexplicable and indefensible—we acknowledge, not merely that He loves us with a love which is verily distracting and bewildering in its mysterious intensity, but likewise that He can do all things, and that everything depends upon Him: that, for example, He has the power of life and death over us, and the supreme and absolute control of all our concerns; and that, though He might indeed make us eternally wretched, yet He ardently yearns to render us eternally happy, if only we will not persistently hinder and impede Him at every turn by our folly and sin. We acknowledge that He comes to us with His hands full of heavenly treasures, and that He longs to surround us hereafter with

every honour, dignity, glory and happiness, if only we will exercise a little patience. So much for our belief : now for our extraordinary behaviour. Though we believe all that I have stated concerning God, we nevertheless offend Him, insult Him and treat Him as we would not treat a sworn enemy. We sin against Him, wilfully, knowingly, deliberately and in His very presence, as though He were powerless to avenge ! Before His very face we mock Him, deny Him, cover Him with derision and scorn. We prefer a miserable trifle before Him ; choose in preference the vilest and most degrading indulgences ; and willingly renounce all claim to His possession for ever in heaven for the sake of the first bauble that chance or the devil flings in our way ! Certainly the patience of God is the most fathomless of mysteries.

Now, I ask, would such conduct be possible were our faith strong, deep, and thoroughly sound ? No ! most undoubtedly : such intolerable insolence and ingratitude are never and can never be found, save where faith in God's power and goodness and love is vague, dim and obfuscated. This, then, seems to be the fundamental distinction between the saint and the ordinary Christian. The one lives rooted to the earth, with the sublime and heavenly truths hidden from him ; the other moves in a totally different world, his mind habitually filled with a profound sense of the intense reality and nearness of what is beyond the reach of the material eye. To the latter, heaven and hell, God and the saints, and the eternal life of the blessed, and the whole invisible creation, are little more than abstractions or empty speculations ; to the former, on the contrary, they are more actual, more intimately present, and far

more influential factors in his life's history than any of the changing and shifting scenes of the world around him can ever be. The unknown can never be an object either of fear or of desire. No man can reasonably hope to be deterred from the commission of sin by the thought of hell, unless he has tried to understand its nature, and the pains and penalties it involves; nor can anyone sincerely long for heaven who has not taken the trouble to learn something of its worth and blessedness. And, assuredly, no one can rightly love God and yearn to serve Him loyally who has not often dwelt in thought upon His infinite beauty, unparalleled goodness, ineffable love, and His other Divine perfections. And, conversely, the more we reflect upon such subjects, and read and study and apply ourselves, the greater will be their influence upon us. If, therefore, we would draw closer to God before life is done; if we would serve Him with greater constancy and generosity, and render our salvation more secure, and our future life more glorious and blessed, we must not begrudge time spent in earnest thought and silent contemplation. The extraordinary thing is that we find time to do a thousand things of no importance whatever, but no time to devote to this. We visit our friends, we read our newspapers, we take our strolls, we travel about, we amuse and recreate ourselves in a thousand ways. Time is found for all that; but of time to spare for meditation on the sublime and eternal truths we can find none. Man is, indeed, as Carlyle somewhere quaintly observes, "somewhat of an owl."

CHAPTER VI.

INCONSISTENCY, OR OUR FAITH AND OUR PRACTICE.

WHEN we pass in review the various arguments that exist in proof of the true Church and consider their number and their force, we are often puzzled to explain how it is that so many, apparently earnest men, still continue to resist her claims and to question her authority.

Yet, however much this thought may exercise our minds, there is another of a far more personal, and (for us at least) of a far more practical character, which few of us trouble ourselves about at all; and that is why we who *do believe* so firmly in the stupendous truths of revelation should nevertheless be so very little affected by them.

That a man who has no belief in a future life should centre all his happiness and pleasure upon this, and should try to extract all the enjoyment he can from it, is the most natural thing in the world; that he should be always plotting and scheming to rise in the social scale, to become rich, influential, and of importance; that he should think of such things during the day and dream of them by night is all intelligible enough; but that *we* who profess the Catholic faith, who acknowledge that we are pilgrims and sojourners upon earth, who look upon this life as but a short avenue leading up to an endless eternity; that we should

take the interest we do in what we know to be so exceedingly flimsy and fleeting, and should attach so much importance to what we are perfectly well aware is empty, vain and unsatisfying, *that* I take to be a far more extraordinary and difficult problem.

We profess belief, and we do in reality believe every dogma, and yet we seem to be able to reconcile with such a profession a line of conduct diametrically opposite. What we openly affirm with our lips we are perpetually denying by our actions; and what we emphatically assert in words to be of the most vital importance, we declare by almost every act of our lives to be of no importance at all. However rational we may be in business, in politics and in our social relations, we seem to be wholly devoid of reason so soon as we begin to deal with the spiritual and the supernatural. Perhaps some of my readers will begin to object, and will protest that I am exaggerating and overstating the case, and that we are not really so inconsistent after all; so suffer me to illustrate the justice of my contention by one or two examples. We shall best serve our purpose if we examine a few points upon which we are all thoroughly agreed. Let us then pass by all matters of mere opinion and confine ourselves entirely to matters of certainty—to truths, in fact, which we as Catholics are bound to believe. We shall then see how little correspondence there is between our conduct and our creed. We shall find that instead of corresponding they are grossly at variance. Thus, *e.g.*, we believe (*a*) that sin is the greatest evil in the world; that no other evil can for one moment be put on a level with it; that even the smallest deliberate venial sin is a more

real misfortune than any loss of health or fortune however great, that neither in itself nor in its consequences can any merely human calamity for one instant bear any sort of proportion to it. We are certain, with a Divine certainty, that for no consideration whatsoever, not even to save our very life, no, nor a hundred thousand lives, would it be right or permissible to commit the least deliberate venial sin, even a passing sin of thought. This is not a pious exaggeration but the literal truth, and a truth which all confess—in fact, to ask if we believe this, is to ask if we are Catholics. Of course we do.

But what is our conduct? Is it consistent? Does it in any way harmonise with our creed? Consider our position as regards venial sins, imperfections, small offences, lesser faults. How do we exhibit our horror of them: our sense of their enormity, baseness and ingratitude? Do we for instance manifest in everyday life a decided and unhesitating preference to suffer every species of calamity, distress, pain, even death, rather than allow our souls to be stained with the guilt of venial sin? Do we so guard ourselves from this pest that years pass away without our having to accuse ourselves of so much as one venial fault? May we not rather ask if a month, or a week, or so much as a single day goes by without our being betrayed into some infringement of the law of God? This is what I mean by habitual inconsistency. We *believe* sin to be the greatest of evils, we *act* as though it were the least.

Again, to take another instance, we believe (*b*) Divine Grace to be so inestimable a treasure, that the gaining of one additional degree of it is not merely more advantageous, but *indefinitely*

and *immeasurably* more advantageous than the doubling of our fortunes, or the multiplying of all our earthly resources a million times over—that to advance one step in virtue is inconceivably more profitable to us, besides being better in itself, and more pleasing to God, than any advance whatsoever in worldly prosperity, social position and political influence ; so that, *e.g.*, we ought, if we possessed them, to be ready to give up the wisdom of a Solomon, the riches of a Crœsus, the beauty of an Absalom, and the dignity and influence of a Cæsar, if we could thereby purchase the least particle of Divine Grace, and would even then give an absurdly inadequate price for it. Do we believe all this in sober truth ? Do we acknowledge that Grace is a priceless treasure, without parallel or equal in the whole of creation ? Well, I distinguish. With our lips we do, and with our intellects too ; but only in theory : in practice we do not. Indeed anyone considering our lives and studying our aims, aspirations, ambitions and desires, would regard us as a set of the most inveterate liars that ever lived ; and might unhesitatingly describe us, one and all, as miserable impostors and contemptible hypocrites, who say one thing but mean exactly the opposite. For how is it possible (they would argue) that men can honestly believe Grace to be the treasure they say it is, while, at the same time, they make no appreciable effort to retain possession of it, or, if already possessed, to increase it—while, in fact, they are more ready and eager to labour, toil and suffer for anything whatsoever rather than for it ? Indeed, the hope of wealth, or honour, or fame, can stir them up to far greater enthusiasm, and set their hearts in a far greater blaze, than the hope

of any increase of this supernatural treasure, of which they are content merely to utter the praises.

Yet somehow or another we contrive, *de facto*, to reconcile two such opposites. Our faith is sound: yes; but, oh! how dead, and cold, and wanting in power and influence!

Or, to take yet another instance: We are fully aware that time is short and fleeting; that life is not merely brief, but that it is most uncertain; and, what is yet far more important, we are fully aware that (*c*) on this moment of time—on this vanishing instant, which we call "Life"—the whole weight of eternity is ever balancing. A man's life, even when considered in itself, is but a tiny span; but when compared with eternity it is simply nothing. Yet upon this brief moment of our earthly existence depends that which no created intellect can measure, and which no human plummet can fathom. On it depends, not merely an eternity of happiness or an eternity of misery, inexpressible and unimagined, but on our use of it depends likewise the *degree* of happiness or misery, as the case may be. Indeed, we may say that God has committed to our hands the forming and fashioning of our future, so that it will be just precisely what we make it, neither better nor worse. So that, even supposing we are fortunate enough to reach the kingdom of God, there is still the further question, what will be our position in that eternal kingdom when we get there? If we take the reward of the least among the blessed for our unit, then, whether our ecstasy of happiness and our delirium of delight is to be represented by ten, or one hundred, or one thousand, or by ten thousand, depends (within limits) upon ourselves.

We know that while breath lasts we may always

keep adding and adding to the amount of acquired grace, and, further, that to every degree of grace there is annexed a claim to a corresponding degree of eternal glory, each particle of which outvalues ten thousand worlds, besides being eternal and imperishable; in such wise, that we may say, in sober truth, that it rests with ourselves whether, throughout untold ages which our mind grows dizzy in imagining, God is to be better known by us, better loved, and more fully enjoyed. We know all this as we know that the oak depends upon the acorn; but what is so lamentable is that our knowledge of the one fact seems to influence us about as little as our knowledge of the other.

We are not consistent. We neither think, nor speak, nor act as becomes men who sincerely lay these truths to heart. Who, indeed, watching our lives and following us as we go about our daily avocations, would for one instant dream that we are conscious of the fact—that we are positively, moment by moment, laying down the foundations and drawing out the plan of an interminable future? Who would imagine—viewing our conduct—that we are conscious that our actions and thoughts are all stamping, with an indelible mark, our life beyond the grave, and helping, in a very real way, to make or to mar a career which is simply endless and without termination? Yet it must be acknowledged that not one of us has any manner of doubt on the subject when it is fairly put before us.

That the future has its root in the present; that time is the seed of eternity; and that "as a man sows, so he shall reap," are truths which no Catholic ever dreams of disputing.

In a word, inconsistency marks our lives, is the

badge of all our tribe, and extends to almost everything supernatural. I have touched upon three instances, and I might have touched upon three thousand; but let these suffice, for I must hurry on to our next point. Enough, I think, has been said to show that we are inconsistent; the next question that suggests itself is—

Whence comes this extraordinary and deplorable contrast between our belief on the one hand, and our practice on the other? Why is it that we act so unreasonably? How are we to account for it?

It would seem at the first glance that, as a matter of fact, we cannot really believe; it seems so impossible that we can inwardly accept the teaching of the Church, and still act so diametrically against it. But yet so it is, for there can be no doubt as to the sincerity and genuine faith of many who even sin grievously. We are all bound either to acknowledge the truths of revelation, or else to cease calling ourselves Catholics. The plain statement of our position is that we do *believe* but we do not *realise*.

This, at once, goes a long way to explain the anomaly; for truths affect us only in so far as they come home to us, and most truths of faith do not come home to us at all. For the most part it is like proposing an abstract truth to the undeveloped mind of a child; or it is as though we should inform a school-boy that the nearest fixed star is more than 19,000,000,000,000 miles off. He will accept the doctrine readily enough; but his brain can conjure up no adequate image of such a distance. He believes; but he does not really *know* what it is he believes. He may have some idea of nineteen miles; but nineteen million million miles confuses and puzzles him, and pro-

duces no definite impression on his brain. Only after a long habit of comparing and contrasting can he gain some faint idea of such a distance. So is it in the spiritual world; the great truths of Faith affect us so little because so little realised. To believe with a mere implicit adhesion of the mind may be enough for the fulfilment of the precept of Divine Faith; but that the various dogmas may influence our life, and spur us on to action, and give force to our will, and firmness to our resolutions, and power in temptation, and courage under trial, besides being believed, they must also be to some extent realised—they must enter into the mind, and shine out with a certain brilliancy and lustre of their own, and shed a light and a warmth in the centre of the heart. Could we only succeed in mastering the truths of revelation we should speedily find ourselves supplied with motives abundant and powerful enough to convert even the most indifferent of us into saints and heroes. The motives that exist to induce us to serve God are not merely exceedingly numerous, but they are also of an extraordinary and almost irresistible power, only they are ordinarily (if I may so express myself) allowed to lie beyond the field of vivid consciousness. If, however, we were to bestir ourselves, and to try to draw them within the inner circle of our mind, they are so excessively cogent and persuasive of their own nature that, without actually forcing the will, we may truly affirm they would become, in practice, all but irresistible. We may read this truth in the life of every saint; and there are moments and periods of our lives when we may have perhaps experienced it ourselves.

The more we consider the matter the more

convinced we shall be that it is not by believing anything fresh—not by adding to the articles of our creed, or discovering any new motives—that we shall be moved to change our lives, but that it can only be by the keener realisation of the old truths familiar from childhood, and which we have known ever since we first began to know anything.

Let me give an instance of what I mean from the life of the great St. Francis Borgia, once a gallant courtier and man of the world, and afterwards a religious, a priest and a saint. Now, his conversion is attributed, not to the discovery of any new truths, but simply and solely to a circumstance which brought vividly before his mind, and strongly illuminated, what were very old truths indeed : it was the sight of the dead body of the renowned Isabella, Empress of Spain.

She died at Toledo, and her remains were conveyed in a leaden coffin to Granada. On their arrival, Francis and the magistrates of the city were convened in order to take an official oath that the remains were really those of the empress. The coffin was accordingly opened, and the body exposed to view ; the sight that met his eyes converted Francis, and transformed him into a saint. Yet, observe, he learned nothing really new. He needed no one to tell him that Isabella was mortal ; that her glory must perish and her beauty fade. Suppose one had asked him, as he gazed upon his sovereign in the fulness of her health and strength : " Will those eyes that now glisten so brightly one day grow fixed and glassy, and those ruddy lips shrink, stiffen and decay ? Will those small white hands, so delicately and wondrously wrought from the clay, ever to clay

return ?" Had one asked him : " Will that royal heart—that seat of all that is noblest and best—one day stop its beating and grow still for ever ?" He would have replied unhesitatingly : " Yes "; undoubtedly, " yes." He believed those truths then as firmly as now, only not so vividly. This superficial knowledge did not act upon his life or spur him on to struggle for sanctity and a greater detachment from the world ; but when death at last came, and he actually witnessed the change it brought—when he, with the bright and beauteous form of his queen still haunting his memory like a beautiful dream, lifted the ponderous lid and gazed upon the hideous and distorted corpse, and smelt the sickening exhalations and the fœtid odour exuding from every pore, pah ! and touched the cold, clammy clay, now fast resolving into its primordial elements—he learned a lesson not easily forgotten.

When he considered that ghastly heap of mouldering flesh, as it was but yesterday, clothed with the royal diadem of state, hung with precious robes, adorned with gold, and jewels of priceless worth, honoured, praised, courted, and cared for—the cynosure of all eyes, the observed of all observers—and then contrasted it with what it had now become, he not merely knew, believed and acknowledged, but he realised and was made intimately conscious of the transitory nature of all earthly things, and of the vanity of beauty, rank, power, wealth and dominion : truths which had so long but skimmed over the surface of his soul as a mere film now penetrated into its centre : the lesson sank deep down into his heart. Up to this it had never been properly learnt ; now it burnt itself, as it were, into his very being,

branding itself on his heart with letters of fire. The result was he changed his life, and consecrated himself wholly and unreservedly to God. Returning to his chamber he locked himself in, and passed the whole night prostrate in prayer, shedding many torrents of bitter tears. "Ah! fool that I am!" he exclaimed, "what am I struggling for? How much longer shall I waste my time in pursuit of mere shadows and unsubstantial nothings! All is worthless that passes with time: all is vanity and vexation of spirit but the love and service of God." He bid an eternal farewell to the vanities and pleasures of the world; he quitted the court, and entered upon a new course of life, serving God with the utmost fervour, and bound himself by oath, should he survive his consort, to enter a religious state of life. The impression produced on his mind by what he had seen continued strong and undiminished, we are assured by his biographer, during the three and thirty years he survived, and exercised its influence to the last.

The special point that I am anxious that my readers should carry away with them and clearly grasp is, that St. Francis was not converted by learning anything he did not already know, but merely by vividly realising a truth which was familiar from his childhood. He was converted by an old truth, but an old truth appealing to him in a new and very striking manner: an old truth illuminated by an unusually strong and lurid light.

What follows? Well, this: that, if we are to be converted from a tepid, careless, listless life, we must not merely believe, but our faith must be lively, bright, clear and penetrating—in fact,

we must accustom ourselves to think, to ponder over the invisible truths, and to meditate assiduously. The reason why pleasures, honour, amusements, wealth and other objects by which the world tempts us, have such power over many is that they force themselves upon our notice; they are so obtrusive, so self-asserting, so perpetually ringing their changes in our ears; whereas the spiritual motives offered to us by God are quite the reverse: they are invisible, intangible, beyond the reach of sense, and come only to those who seek them. We shall never advance till we acquaint ourselves more thoroughly with the truths we profess. The fact is, we are all living in a sort of dream. We see, speak and move among what is unsubstantial, unreal and shadowy, and the great spiritual world, which fades not with time, is all about us. Until, indeed, we consider it worth our while to devote to the contemplation of eternal things some of those long hours which we lavish so readily and so prodigally upon temporal things, we must not, it appears to me, expect to make much progress. The *invisible* can never influence our conduct or be a motive of action *while it remains invisible.* It must be rendered visible . . . visible to the eyes of faith by meditation.

The analogy between the body and the soul in regard to their respective nourishment is very striking. Food may be in the greatest abundance all around us, but unless it be eaten, digested and assimilated into the system, it will never strengthen or nourish the body; so is it with the spiritual food of the soul, which is Divine truth: till we are prepared to digest it, and meditate upon it, and turn it over in our minds, and familiar-

ise ourselves with it, it will never spur us on to great deeds. "It is only those," as Father Faber so beautifully says, "who are ever conversant with the great things that God has done for them, who will ever be inspired to do great things for the love of Him."

There is evidently but one conclusion to which we can come. We must not merely assent coldly to truths proposed; we must strive to apprehend them and give them an actuality. They must become as real to us as the daylight and the sunshine. We must resolve to direct our thoughts in an especial manner each day, for a certain fixed time, to some one or another of the great truths. It is the surest, the simplest, the most direct means of acquiring sanctity here and eternal glory hereafter. Hence all the saints, without exception, both practised meditation themselves and exhorted others to do the same. Suarez, one of the greatest theologians, declares it to be morally necessary for all who wish to rise above mere mediocrity. St. Ignatius makes it the basis and foundation of the spiritual life of his Order. St. Teresa, that marvellous mistress of the interior life, insists upon it above and before all things. She declares it to be impossible for anyone to practise meditation faithfully, and at the same time to continue leading a sinful and tepid life. He must either abandon tepidity or he must abandon meditation. The two cannot go on together. But why speak of the saints? Has not a far higher authority already spoken in the same sense? Has not the Holy Spirit promised immunity from the only evil we fear, if we will but reflect upon the great truths? "Think of thy last end and thou shalt never sin." Nay, more, does He not (speaking by the mouth

of His prophet, ascribe the widespread sinfulness and wickedness of the world to an absence of this practice, and to nothing else? "With desolation is the whole world laid desolate, *because* there is no man who considereth in his heart."

Is any further proof needed? If we are sincerely anxious to attain to true sanctity, and to enjoy God for all eternity, we surely cannot neglect so powerful and simple a means. One thing is, at all events, clear, *viz.*, a person who cares little about the means, cares little about the end. Self-deception is very easy in this matter. But it is a mere piece of delusion to flatter ourselves that we really desire to lead holy and innocent lives if we begrudge even one half-hour a day spent in meditation. Let us apply this test, and if we cannot bring ourselves to undertake, even though it may be with some little inconvenience, daily meditation, we should, at least, be honest enough to acknowledge that our desire for perfection is very weak, since it extends to the length of doing only what will cost us little or nothing.

CHAPTER VII.

UNITY OF FAITH.

JESUS CHRIST came down upon earth, and walked among men, to teach them the truths of eternal life, and to instruct them in all things necessary to salvation. And before quitting the world He bade His Apostles and disciples to continue this great work which He had begun, and go forth over the face of the whole earth, and teach all nations. He furthermore added, that whosoever accepted His doctrine, and believed, should be saved; whereas whosoever believed it not, should be condemned; or, in plain English, should be damned for all eternity.

The Apostles were commissioned to teach others the truth which Christ had taught them, and to make it known throughout every land. Now, truth is one and the same in all places and at all times. It has none of the properties of the chameleon. It cannot change its form or complexion to suit the conveniences of men. This may be asserted of all truth, whether secular or religious. That a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, or that the whole is greater than a part, etc., is as true this century as last, and on the south of the equator as on the north; nor can climate or position or surroundings ever make true false, or false true.

Hence, to say that Christ came to establish the reign of truth, is the same thing as to say that He came to bind all men together in one and the same belief—in a word, to found a Church, wide as the world, co-extensive with mankind, every member of which was to profess identically the same doctrine. Hence, according to the intention of God, every mind was to bow in humble acknowledgment of the same Divine faith.

To appreciate the gigantic difficulty of the task undertaken by Christ it will be useful to take a brief survey of the nature and character of men. Consider what an innate propensity there is to differ among themselves. What endless diversity of opinion exists upon every possible subject under heaven. What a countless multiplicity of views are constantly expressed in the press and in society upon every topic, from the greatest and most momentous down to the least and most trivial. For, though all men possess reason, yet their reason being finite and extremely limited, the same truth seems to present itself to different minds in different ways, and none seem able to grasp any truth in its entirety. In this respect the mind's eye may be said to resemble in some measure the material eye. Things appear differently to the eye according to the difference of the point of view. The sun and the moon appear to a spectator on earth to be about the same size, though one is many million times the bulk of the other; so, too, they appear to be pretty equally distant from the earth, although we know *aliunde* that while one is tens of millions of miles away, the other is but tens of thousands. So, again, an object which looks perfectly straight when lying

on the dry ground, seems to be crooked and bent when half-immersed in the water. A similar remark may be made with regard to colours. When viewed by gaslight they appear to be of one tint, and of quite another when viewed by daylight. So, too, what is clearly seen by a man with normal sight will be obscure, or altogether invisible, to one who is short-sighted, and so on, and so on.

Now such strange diversities so often observable in the material world have their counterpart in the spiritual, moral and intellectual world. No observer can have lived for many years with men without being struck by this strange fact. Whether it be due to difference of education, or of training, or of surroundings, or of habits of thought, men will see the self-same things in totally different lights.

Let me illustrate my meaning by one or two very common examples: A trial is about to take place. Twelve jurymen are summoned. They are men of mature age, of average ability, of fair education, and with a reputation for sound sense. In neither of the contending parties are they particularly interested. And, what is more, they honestly and conscientiously resolve to set aside all prejudice, personal feeling and bigotry, etc., and to be guided in their judgment simply and solely by the merits of the case as it is set before them. Yet, incredible as it may appear, it often turns out that even this handful of men cannot agree upon a verdict. Consider the whole circumstances carefully. All twelve jurors have assisted at the trial; all have carefully watched the proceedings from the opening of the case: all have listened to the pleadings of the counsel

for the plaintiff and of the counsel for the defendant; all have gazed on the countenance of the judge, and heard his summing up and final instructions and remarks. Precisely the same words, sentences, intonations, looks and gestures have come under the notice of each of these twelve men. There is no information afforded to one which is not afforded to all, and yet strange to say they cannot agree. Here is a clear proof that the same evidence affects some in one way and some in another. One juryman deems the prisoner innocent, another rests quite satisfied that he is guilty. One would pronounce the death sentence with perfect equanimity, the other would forthwith set the accused at liberty.

Here then we have a dozen men, of a like station in life, living in the same age, in the same city, and amid the same surroundings, unable to agree upon one definite point concerning which all have had the same evidence. If this be true, what chance, let me ask, in all fairness, would there be of getting *the entire world* to agree upon *any single article* of faith? And how immeasurably more impossible it would be, by mere argument, to persuade all men to agree upon the *whole summary* of truth, which goes to make up what we call Christian revelation! It would certainly be wholly impossible by any force of mere reasoning and argument.

Or, take a somewhat different example. Say politics. Here, within the single city of London, living side by side, are men of the most divergent views. Within a circumference of twelve miles we find that men of the same education, possessing the same information, with access to the same sources, who watch the course of events

with the same eagerness, and who read and study history with equal interest and avidity, draw the most opposite conclusions, and advocate the most opposite policy. They are Whigs or Tories, strict Conservatives, advanced Liberals, or violent Radicals. They denounce and condemn one another; and from platform and rostrum, openly declare, and probably sincerely believe, that their opponents are enemies of their country; that their policy is subversive of all order and prosperity; and that, if followed, will drive England to the dogs! Yet, while one reproaches the other in the bitterest terms, each may very easily be following his own deeply seated and honest convictions. And so it is with almost any question that may be suggested. Ask, *e.g.*, an Englishman, a Prussian, and a Frenchman to give you the true historical account of the battle of Waterloo. What a contrast there will be in the three different pictures, though all are supposed to be painting the same scene! With what a partial hand will they apportion the blame and the praise, the shame and the glory of that memorable day! Or discuss with an Italian and a German the relative merits of Dante and Goethe. Ask which poet is really the greater. The German will give you twenty reasons for preferring Goethe; the Italian will discover or invent just as many for preferring Dante.

Men split up and divide upon every subject. If we set aside mathematical and axiomatical truths, we may safely say that there is hardly any one subject upon which they are absolutely agreed. On questions of music, painting and architecture; of history, literature and poetry, how extraordinarily man differs from man. Who will

persuade all men to agree upon the best systems of government, the best methods of education, the best means of fortifying a city, attacking a square, razing a redoubt, or prosecuting a campaign, or, for the matter of that, even the best way of cooking an egg or boiling a potato? On almost every subject that can engage the mind of man there is disagreement, opposition and constant dissension. So much so, indeed, that *Quot homines, tot sententiæ:* "as many men, so many judgments," has become a common proverb in every language.

Innumerable other examples might be given, but I think enough has been said to show how little men are disposed to agree, and how extremely difficult it is to find, I will not say any one race, or even any one nation, but any one country, town or city, in which all the inhabitants are united upon so much as a single point.

Some years ago a well-known London daily paper put to its contributors the question: "*Is marriage a failure?*" There were thousands of published replies, but all different. Every writer modified and qualified his (or her) answer by conditions and considerations of his own. Another paper requested its contributors to amuse themselves and the public during the silly season by mentioning the ten most distinguished men in history, and collocating them in order of merit; and, of course, with a similar result. In fact, though God has conferred the gift of reason upon all, yet even in the same country, and in the same age, there will be found to exist many opposite and contradictory views on the most homely and familiar subjects.

Bearing this fact in mind, we shall be in a better

position to estimate the enormous difficulty of the task undertaken by Jesus Christ. For what did He propose to do? To efface all differences in matters of supernatural faith, and to draw together in a bond of perfect religious unity, not one race or country, but all races and all countries; and not merely all men living in one period or century, but all races, tongues, nationalities and peoples who should ever be born, to the end of time. He resolved to make it practically possible to reduce to harmony the religious beliefs of hundreds of millions—or, if we include those still unborn, of millions of millions of men of every age, character, constitution, condition, education, race and colour, and to put them in a position to know and to accept the whole body of revealed truths; truths, be it observed, most difficult, most abstruse, most unintelligible to mere reason, and wholly above the mind of the wisest man to unravel and explain; such as the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity, the Incarnation and the Holy Eucharist. Rich and poor, old and young, learned and ignorant, lords and labourers, masters and slaves, were to obtain eternal life by accepting the same revelation. The words are most clear and categorical: "Whosoever believeth, shall be saved; whosoever believeth not, shall be condemned."

Yet what vast differences exist in the mental condition of different persons. Contrast the highly-educated academician, fresh from the university, with the decrepit old street woman, whose thoughts scarce ever soar beyond her apple stall or steaming tray of roasted chestnuts; or the simple lay brother ripening for heaven within the peaceful cloisters of some monastic retreat, with the soldier bold, ready for carnage,

bloodshed and tumult, quick, testy and impatient for the fray, and with the rude blast of war blowing in his ears; or, again, the old judge, slow, serious and solemn, pronouncing in muffled tones the sentence of death, with the country maiden all blushes and smiles, dancing and coquetting with her companions on the village green. Marked, indeed, is the contrast; yet these, and all others, from the king upon his throne down to the king's humblest subject and meanest slave or bondsman, have to subscribe and to assent to the same dogmas and articles of faith.

Such contrasts as the above are to be met even within the walls of the same city, and are few and unimportant as compared to others that exist within the broader circumference of the world-wide Church. We are dealing, not with a city, but with the entire earth. Here we are confronted not only with different individuals, but with different tribes and peoples; peoples as far removed from one another in character and disposition as in latitude and longitude. On one side we have the highly cultured European, on the other the degraded Australian black; while between these two extremes innumerable different races and characters take their stand, *e.g.*, the woolly-headed negro, toiling in the sugar plantations beneath a scorching tropical sun; the undeveloped Esquimau, drinking train-oil in the land of perpetual ice and snow; the Bedouin, traversing the sandy deserts of Arabia; the Chinaman, plucking the tender leaves in the sunny tea groves of his own country; the venturesome Venezuelan, fishing along the banks of the Orinoco; and the Neapolitan Lazzarone, sleeping and basking in the broiling sun.

Every man, woman, and child throughout the whole earth, even though separated from one another by habits, customs, traditions, language, occupation, interest and antecedents, is commanded to unite in professing the one true religion taught by Jesus Christ. As to our Lord's intention there can be no shadow of doubt. He came to teach the *whole* world, and to teach the truth; and truth is essentially *one*. He even prayed that this unity might always subsist. In the solemn hour preceding His bitter Passion He addressed a prayer for unity to His Eternal Father: "Father, keep them in Thy Name . . . that they may be one, as We also are one" (John xvii. 11). And again: "Not for them only do I pray but for those also who through their word shall believe in Me: that they *all* may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee" (John xvii. 20, 21). St. Paul, when writing to the Ephesians, refers to this fact in very remarkable words. Christ, he tells them, "gave some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, *until we all meet into the unity of faith*, and of the knowledge of the Son of God," etc. (chap. iv. 11-13); for there can be but *one faith*, just as there can be but one supreme Lord (Eph. iv. 5).

It is clear from reason, and from the explicit teaching of Holy Scripture, that the Incarnate God desired unity of faith among men. He wished that all, in every place and in every age, should profess the same eternal truths; and He wished this sincerely and honestly, and imposed it upon mankind as a most serious obligation.

But it would be inconsistent, not only with the known goodness and benignity of God, but even with His wisdom and His justice, to command a unity so contrary to nature, so impossible to unaided reason, so difficult even to the best disposed, unless He at the same time provided some really easy and sufficient means of maintaining it. He who knows so well the clay of which we are formed, and the weakness and imbecility of our nature, would not, and in justice could not, expect or exact union, unless He established some simple, practical and efficient principle of union, easy to work and easy to apply.

This principle exists nowhere save in the Catholic Church, and is no other than the principle of Divine authority. The Church of God, which is spread throughout the world, is held together by an infallible Head. In all matters of doctrine and morals the millions of the faithful are dependent on their pastors and priests; the thousands of priests are dependent upon their bishops and archbishops; and the hundreds of bishops and archbishops are dependent on their sovereign lord, the Pope. The Pope, as Vicar of God and Vicegerent of Christ upon earth, is the centre of a vast organism, which branches off in all directions as the spokes of a wheel branch off from the hub, and has its ramifications in every country, and extends to the farthest ends of the earth. As every one of the radii of a circle meets at and is connected with the centre, so every member of the Church is kept in touch with the centre of spiritual authority at Rome. Having thus connected every member of the Church through a series of ascending gradations to one Head, the only thing needed to secure and main-

tain perfect union of doctrine is the infallibility of that Head. The recognition of the Sovereign Pontiff's absolute immunity from all error in faith and morals when teaching the whole Church, "urbi et orbi," would ensure a perfect union throughout the whole body of the faithful. This God in His infinite wisdom promised, and by His infinite power secured. He imparted this stupendous gift first of all to St. Peter, and then in turn to all those destined to succeed him in the government of His Church. "Thou art *Peter* and upon *this rock* I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," etc. (Matt. xvi. 18). And again: "I have prayed for thee that *thy faith* fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 32).

The wisdom displayed in this wonderful contrivance is truly Divine. No one considering it can fail to be impressed. Indeed, one hardly knows which to admire more—its marvellous simplicity or its extraordinary efficacy. It is at once the most practical method of attaining the desired end, and the easiest to work, and reminds us of some of those beautiful contrivances in nature which fulfil a most complicated purpose by the simplest possible arrangement.

Ten thousand streams, all of which are supplied from the same fountain-head, must all be the same; so ten thousand peoples and races, all of which derive their doctrine from one infallible source, must ever profess the same doctrine, and thus enjoy perfect unity of belief.

So long as a man has humility enough to obey the authority of the Vicar of Christ, which is no older than that of Christ Himself ("who heareth you, heareth Me"), so long will he remain in the

unity of faith. When disputes arise, when differences of opinion are expressed, no breach is formed, for the matter is referred to Rome, and the Pope decides the question, and puts an end to the dispute. For the disputant either accepts the decision or proudly resists. In the first hypothesis he remains a dutiful child of the Church, and in the second hypothesis the Church simply casts him out of her communion as a rebel. The unhappy man may be a cause of scandal for a week, and of comment for a month; but a few years pass, he dies, and in a short time his very name is forgotten; while the Church moves gloriously on, invulnerable, immutable, the Bride of Christ, and the glory of her children.

At the present moment, the Catholic Church, though spread throughout the entire world, remains ever one integral organic whole. And why is this? Because the self-same Divine voice that spoke through Peter in the council chamber of Jerusalem nearly two thousand years ago, still speaks through Pius X. All Catholics recognise him as the mouthpiece of the infinite God, and when he pronounces a decree or defines a doctrine, two hundred and fifty millions of loyal subjects bow in cheerful, grateful obedience before him, and accept his ruling and his authority. He watches over the whole flock. He has been appointed pastor by Christ Himself. All are bound to listen to him as to Christ in person, and who despises him, despises Christ (Luke x. 16).

While others are tossed about on the pathless sea of error, and are carried hither and thither by every wind of doctrine, we are at peace. What a contrast between the Church and the sects! Who

but the stone-blind can fail to distinguish the work of God from the work of man ?

What is the bond of union among Protestants ? Where is their infallible authority ? The Bible. But is the Bible, when left to each one's private interpretation, a principle of unity ? History and experience prove it to be precisely the reverse. It is a most prolific principle of disunion, of discord and dissension. So soon as ever the principle was introduced, men split up into different sections, according to the different interpretations they gave to the various passages. And when they differed among themselves, who was to settle their disputes and to adjust their difficulties ? Who was to preserve unity ? There was no one. They recognised no living infallible voice. Each felt himself to be as good a judge as his neighbour. What was the result ? Chaos ! In a word, endless divisions, and the formation of a heterogeneous assembly of persons known by the extraordinary name[1] of Protestants, not really united in one organic whole, but each following his own glimmering light—constituting an assemblage to which courtesy extends the name of Church, but which is about as much like the Church of God as a heap of loose stones is like a cathedral.

But more of this in the next chapter.

[1] Webster defines a *Protestant*—" a Christian who protests against the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church." Can one conceive any form of religion more inane, empty and unattractive than one which is based and founded upon protests !

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS.

"In order to know the religion of Protestants," says Chillingworth, "neither the doctrine of Luther, nor that of Calvin or Melancthon is to be taken, nor the Confession of Augsburg or Geneva, nor the Catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the Anglican Church, nor even the harmony of all the Protestant confessions, but that which they all subscribe to, as the perfect rule of their faith and actions, that is to say, the Bible. Yes, the Bible, THE BIBLE ALONE IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS."—*Vide The Religion of Protestants, a sure road to Salvation*, by Dr. CHILLINGWORTH (chap. vi., 56).

IF we turn to *Whitaker's Almanack* for 1900 we shall find that he enumerates two hundred and seventy-four "Religious Denominations" in England alone. In the United States of America there is said to be almost an equal number, so that we can hardly be accused of exaggeration if we say that, throughout the English-speaking world, there are many hundred distinct bodies of Christians.

Here we seem, at first sight, to be confronted with a veritable sea of confusion, and to be listening to a perfect babel of conflicting tongues. There seems no way of classifying these hundreds of different Churches. They refuse to group themselves in any regular order. Each is a law to itself. The outlines of each are so indistinct, and so vague and ill-defined, that they seem to blend

almost imperceptibly into one another like the floating clouds in a storm-swept sky. Looking, however, somewhat closer, we find that among these Christian Churches there is one which is fundamentally different from all the rest. Different, in the first place, in the number of its adherents. Not merely in the sense of being larger and more extended and more universally diffused than any other, which might not be very remarkable, but in the sense of being so *immeasurably* greater as to exceed numerically, not only any single Christian Church taken alone, but all other Christian Churches put together. So that, if we divide all Christian Churches into two parts, placing the Roman Catholic Church upon one side, and all the other forms of Christianity on the other, we shall find a larger number gathered together under the banner of the Catholic Church than under the host of distinct banners held aloft by all the varieties of conflicting sects. That is perhaps the most obvious distinction, lying, as it were, on the surface, and the first to attract the notice of the casual observer.

But there is another and far more important distinction, which takes us at once to the root of the matter, and that consists in the difference of the rule of faith. The hundreds of different Christian denominations may, and do, differ to an extraordinary extent among themselves. They vary in innumerable unimportant, and in a considerable number of important points, both of doctrine and of discipline. Yet, however widely they may differ upon other points, they all, or almost all, are agreed as to their general rule of faith. They all accept Reason and the Scriptures, or, if you will, the Scriptures, interpreted by

Reason, as the source and very foundation of their respective creeds. They one and all point to the Holy Scriptures as to the infallible and unerring word of God. They accept no other infallible or unerring authority upon earth. The Bible is the Divine Book, and contains all that is necessary to salvation; and there is no other Divine authority, no other infallible guide or teacher to whom men can have access. Though each denomination is distinct, and unlike every other, yet one and all found their creed on the only infallible teacher they recognise, *viz.*, the Bible. "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation"; and "Whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man," etc. So runs Article VI. of the Church of England.[1] "Protestants assert that the Old and New Testaments are the only safe source of religious knowledge and form the *sole rule of faith.*"[2]

It is only when we turn to the gigantic Catholic Church, which stretches forth her arms over the entire earth, that we discover a totally different rule of faith. The Catholic Church accepts Reason, just as the Protestant Church does. It is in her eyes a gift of God, to be exercised and employed to the utmost; she also accepts the Holy Scriptures as the inspired word of God, and as containing a Divine revelation. She even pays them more honour and more respect, and treats them with even greater reverence[3] than any of those Churches that profess to found their creed on them alone. So far, she and all other Christian bodies are

[1] *Vide* Thirty-nine Articles.

[2] *Vide History of Civilisation in Scotland*, by Jn. Mackintosh, vol. ii., p. 35.

[3] See *Concerning the Holy Bible*, chaps. viii. and ix., by same author.

one. But here she parts company with them. She does *not* believe that God has left this inspired Book to the mercy of fallible men to be turned and twisted into a thousand conflicting meanings, to be made to support doctrines and practices not only different, but opposite ; and to be a basis upon which hundreds of distinct and irreconcilable sects may take their stand. She believes that God confided this inspired volume to the guardianship of a living and infallible Church. That this Church is the only authorised interpreter and explainer of its pages. That no passage can really bear two or more *contradictory* senses ; and that where such contradictory interpretations are set forth, it rests with her, and with her alone, to decide absolutely, definitely and with unwavering certainty which is, and which is not, the true interpretation ; and so to secure unity, or truth, which is the same thing ; for where there is truth, there unity must always be found also.

There are, in fact, but two systems of Christianity possible—the one based on private judgment, and the other on authority. The system of private judgment is by far the more flattering to human pride, and that is why it has commended itself to so many haughty and rebellious spirits. It makes each man, not a disciple, but a master ; not a learner, but a teacher ; not a pupil, but a critic. But, as a consequence, it renders all real unity, not only difficult, but practically impossible. Now, unless we are out and out rationalists and deny that there is infallibility anywhere, which would be to destroy supernatural religion altogether, I take it as evident that but two courses are open to us : either we must accept the Bible as the only infallible teacher, or we must

accept the *magisterium* of the living and articulate Church as equally infallible. If the infallible Bible alone will not suffice, we are driven to acknowledge an infallible Church. Now our reasons for not accepting the "Bible and the Bible only" theory are manifold. In the space at my disposal I can suggest only a few of the more important:

Firstly. Christ, when founding His kingdom on earth, never wrote as much as a single line of any kind, which seems strange if He intended each man's religion to depend upon his personal interpretation of certain documents.

Secondly. Though He commanded His disciples to "Go and *teach* all nations," to "*preach* to every living creature," etc., He never once commanded any one of them to commit a word to paper or parchment.

Thirdly. Even the very expressions He made use of seem to emphasise this fact; for He does not say: "If any man will not *read the Scriptures*," but, "If any man will not *hear the Church*, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican." He does not say: "He that follows the *Scriptures* as his guide, follows Me," but rather, "He that *heareth you*, heareth Me." And, again, "Faith cometh (*not by reading*, but) by *hearing*"; and so on, in many other passages.

Fourthly. Because (*a*) very few of the Apostles wrote at all. Out of the "twelve," only five wrote any portion of the Bible, *viz.*, St. Matthew, St. John, St. Peter, St. Jude, and St. James; and (*b*) because those who did put pen to paper were urged to do so from special circumstances, as when absent, or in prison, and from accidental motives; and (*c*) even then, they did not address their writings to the whole Church, but to some one or another

section specially needing them, or to some local Church, and occasionally even to mere individuals, as is the case in the Epistles to Titus, to Timothy, and to Philemon, etc.

Fifthly. Because the very form and construction of the Scriptures seem to show that the Bible was never intended to be a text-book of doctrine, or a summary of belief. There is no clear or methodical statement of the teaching of Christ, proceeding in regular sequence, but exhortations, narratives and incidents, etc., are all intermingled.

Sixthly. Because the entire Bible was not even written until whole generations of Christians had already passed away; *i.e.*, the Gospel and Apocalypse of St. John had no existence for more than sixty years after our Lord's Ascension.

Seventhly. Because even after the various books of Scripture had been composed, they were not at once gathered together into one volume. Some were to be found in one place, some in another, and it was not until hundreds of years had rolled slowly by that the various inspired writings were collected and placed under the same cover; so that during many generations scarcely anyone could have even seen the complete collection, unless indeed he were a great traveller, much less have founded his religion upon it.

Eighthly. Because even when at last the whole of the inspired writings had been collected into one volume, not one person in a thousand could have obtained possession of them. There was no printing; and even paper had not yet been invented, so that the only possible means of securing a copy of this volume (in which each man is supposed to find his religion) was to get it written out by hand, letter by letter, and word by word: a pro-

cess which would, according to some authorities, take a scribe five years to accomplish. Nor was this all: the copy had to be written on vellum or parchment. As a consequence, the price was enormous and prohibitive. No one but a rich man could afford to purchase such a thing. So that for fourteen hundred years the system of "the Bible and the Bible only," interpreted by each individual, would seem to be an impossible one, and, if impossible, then to be rejected by every reasonable and reflecting man. As the well-known Anglican historian, W. Lecky, observes: "Protestantism *could not possibly have existed* without a general diffusion of the Bible, and that diffusion was impossible until after the two inventions of paper and printing."[1] Clearly a religion dependent for its very existence upon such human inventions, unknown during fourteen centuries of Christianity, cannot be the religion of Christ.

Ninthly. There was not only the difficulty of procuring a copy of the Scriptures, there was the yet greater difficulty of reading them. The Protestant historian, Macaulay, tells us that: "There was then throughout the greater part of Europe very little knowledge, and that little was confined to the clergy. Not one man in five hundred," he says, "could have spelled his way through a psalm; books were few and costly: the art of printing was unknown." "Probably," writes a professor of the University of Laval, Abbé Bégin, "there is no exaggeration in saying that nine-tenths of the population were not in a position to read the manuscript of the Bible. According to the Protestant system we should have to conclude, therefore, that these poor unfortunate

[1] *Rationalism in Europe*, vol. ii., p. 209.

beings had no rule of faith, and were out of the path of salvation."

Tenthly. Because, whereas we *know*, on the one hand, that Christ desired and prayed for unity of faith and doctrine among His disciples, we know, on the other hand, that the "Bible only" system has been the direct cause of interminable divisions and innumerable dissensions. In the words of the Anglican historian, Lecky:[1]

"It has been most abundantly proved that from Scripture *honest* and *able* men have derived, and do derive, arguments in support of the most opposite opinions."[2] And if this be true in the case of honest and able men, what will be the result in the case of the less honest and the less able? In our eyes such a system stands self-condemned.

The above facts present themselves as insuperable difficulties against the Protestant rule of faith. But there remain others far greater still. There are three fundamental tenets which are absolutely essential to the Protestant theory, but which on strict Protestant principles we hold to be absolutely unproved and unprovable. Let me exemplify them in this way: A Protestant comes up to me, holding the Bible in his hand. He says: "This is the word of God; this the foundation of my faith. I don't want any infallible Church to teach me. All I need lies here, within the cover of this book." Thus Dean Farrar is reported to have said: "We take our stand on the open Bible, and declare it to be the very charter of our existence."

[1] On 2nd November, 1895, Mr. Lecky wrote: "I was brought up in the Church of England, and have never severed myself from it."—*Vide St. James's Gazette*, 14th November, 1895.

[2] *Rationalism in Europe*, vol. ii., p. 174.

What would we naturally reply? We would say: "Not so fast, my friend. Are you *quite sure* that you hold in your hand the true Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible?"

I. Take the most important part of it, *viz.*, the New Testament. Consider its history. It was written by different men, at different times, in different places, and under different circumstances. The different Gospels and Epistles composing it were floating about in different parts of the Church, together with dozens and scores of other Epistles and Gospels,[1] and it was not till the fourth century that the Catholic Church, after carefully examining them one by one, said: "This is Scripture"; "that is not Scripture": "this we enrol in the canon"; "that we reject." For example, there was a gospel which has been attributed to one of the twelve Apostles, *viz.*, St. Bartholomew.[2] The Catholic Church said: We reject that, even though the writer *was an Apostle;* on the other hand, there was a Gospel written by St. Luke, who was *not an Apostle*, and the Church said: We accept that, even though the writer was not an Apostle.

In this way the present Bible came into existence. Now, either the Church which made the selection is infallible, or she is not infallible. If you say she is infallible, then you are bound to listen to her, and to obey her, and you must become a member of the Catholic Church, which

[1] Note, for instance, the Protevangelion, the Gospel according to St. Thomas, the Gospel of Nicodemus, the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the Epistles of St. Clement, of St. Barnabas, the Books of Hermas, the Acts of St. Andrew, and a great many others, which the Church has refused to insert in the Canon of Scripture.

[2] The Gospel according to St. Bartholomew is mentioned by St. Jerome.

is the only Church which has ever even so much as put forward the claim ; but if you say she is fallible, then you acknowledge that she may err ; and if she may err, then she may have erred in her selection of the books of Scripture, and you have no certainty that you possess the Holy Bible at all ! Some of the books you include may be mere human documents—as, on the other hand, some of the really inspired books may have been omitted. Different Protestant denominations have different Bibles.

Luther rejected from the Canon of the Scriptures Job, Ecclesiastes, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Second Epistle of St. Peter, and the Second and Third of St. John, that of St. Jude, and the Apocalypse (or Revelations). Calvin rejected Esther, Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus and Maccabees. Spinoza doubts the authenticity of the Pentateuch, Judges, Kings, etc. ; Strauss, the Gospel of St. Matthew ; Griesbach, the Gospel of St. Mark. Who will decide between these, and countless others, if there be no infallible court of appeal, no unerring voice to pronounce sentence ? No ! If there be no infallible Church to settle such questions, no one can declare with any certainty that he possesses the Scriptures at all. Even were one satisfied with human testimony, it would not help one, for human testimony is not agreed on the point.

II. A second difficulty arises concerning the question of inspiration. What proof can anyone bring forward that the Bible (granted that we have the Bible) contains the whole inspired word of God, and nothing but the inspired word of God ? Inspiration is not a thing that can be proved by mere history or intrinsic evidence.

Whether the Holy Ghost Himself has guided and guarded a writer and protected him from all error, etc., can be known only by an appeal to authority. It does not admit of ordinary direct proof, or of ocular demonstration. So that, unless the authority appealed to be an infallible one, a man cannot be absolutely sure that the Scriptures are inspired. No such authority can be found outside the Catholic Church. There is not even agreement among the various Protestant denominations upon this most important, and in their case, positively essential, point.

III. But the third difficulty is the most insuperable of all, and that is the difficulty of interpretation. The Bible, however holy a book, and however certainly inspired, is not merely useless, but worse than useless to one who draws from it doctrines and principles which are contrary to its real teaching. Yet this is inevitable, unless there be a Divinely assisted, and consequently an infallible interpreter. Some would persuade us that the Bible is an easy and simple book to understand; so easy, in fact, that "he who runs may read." Nothing could be further from the truth. This may be proved from the Scriptures themselves. Thus the Eunuch of the Queen of Ethiopia, who was studying the writings of the prophet Isaias as he journeyed home, admitted to the Deacon Philip that he could not understand the sense of what he read, unless someone explained it to him. After reading out some prophetic utterances, he turned to Philip and said: "I beseech thee, of whom doth the prophet speak this? of himself, or of some other man?" (see Acts viii. 27-35). The Eunuch himself was unable to decide.

In the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel (verse 25 *et seq.*) we have another illustration of the difficulty of correctly interpreting the inspired text. Our Lord is obliged to interpret, to His own disciples on their way to Emmaus, "the things concerning Himself, beginning from Moses and from all the prophets." He told them that they had not understood, and therefore He "opened to them the Scriptures" —ὡς δίμνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς. St. Peter, inspired by the Holy Ghost, reveals to us still more clearly that there are "certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures (ὡς καὶ τάς λοιπὰς γραφάς), to their own destruction" (2 Peter iii. 16).

The truth of this contention is fully borne out by the experience of past and present ages. One person reads the Divine oracles in one way, and another in another, so that from one and the same infallible source are derived totally distinct and opposite doctrines. The followers of Novatian take one view and the followers of Sabellius another; while Donatists, Arians, Pelagians and Nestorians all differ among themselves. Truly does Erasmus remark that "the interpretation of the Scriptures by individual minds has never ended in anything but laming texts, which walked perfectly straight before"; while St. Augustine, as early as the fifth century, declared: "non aliunde natæ sunt hæreses, nisi dum Scripturæ bonæ intelliguntur non bene." Butler reminds us how—

> Religion spawn'd a various rout
> Of petulant capricious sects
> The maggots of corrupted texts.

Some Protestants to whom the objection has been put have attempted to meet it by saying: "This may be true with careless and worldly minded men, but if a devout Christian takes up the Bible with reverence, places himself in the presence of God, and earnestly prays for the assistance and light of the Holy Spirit, he will be sure to arrive at a correct and true meaning, so that he has nothing to fear." Well! We English are considered a practical people. We like to test the theory for ourselves; for to use a homely phrase, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." Then let us, for the moment, accept the theory, just to see how it works. Take three honourable, good and learned men; *i.e.* (1) the Anglican Bishop of Lincoln, the late Dr. King; (2) the Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, the late Dr. Ryle; and (3) the late Rev. Dr. Martineau, a representative of Unitarianism. Each believes in the Bible. Each, no doubt, approaches the study of it in becoming dispositions. Each craves God's grace, and light, and assistance. Yet each rises from his knees holding a totally different, and wholly irreconcilable doctrine. The late Protestant Bishop of Lincoln finds authority in Scripture for a sacrificing priesthood, for priestly absolution, and for the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The late Protestant Bishop of Liverpool, on the other hand, can discover nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he finds, that any clergyman who attempts or pretends to forgive sins is usurping the authority of Christ; further, he fails to discover any reason for believing that Christ is truly present under the sacramental species. "This is My Body" means one thing to the late Protestant Bishop of Lincoln, and quite another

to the late Protestant Bishop of Liverpool. Still both are able to find in the Bible the Divinity of Christ. But a Unitarian, as clever and as sincere as any Anglican prelate, takes up the inspired writings, and he can find no proof within its pages even that Christ is God! He prays, and studies and reads the Bible, and then comes to the conclusion that Christ is not God at all. You urge that the Scripture speaks of Christ as "God," and as the "Son of God." He will reply: "Yes, but may not such words be applied to a mere man? Does not the psalmist say, 'Ye are *all* gods, and sons of the Most High'?" If you return to the charge and point out that Christ's Divinity is clearly contained in His own declaration, "I and the Father are one," he will again retort: "Not at all; that is merely a union of heart and will such as exists, or may exist, among men. Nay, this is [he will urge] evident from Christ's prayer—'Father, that *they* may be one, *even as I and Thou art one.*'" This is a fair specimen of the absurd and senseless position to which the private interpretation of the Bible inevitably leads. Here are three well-known, highly-respected, learned and scholarly men each discovering a totally different doctrine in the self-same words.

Is the Holy Ghost directing them all? Is the Changeless, Eternal and Uncreated Truth whispering "yes" in the ears of one, and "no" into the ears of another; and declaring that a thing is false and true, black and white, at one and the same time? To say so would be blasphemous. If, instead of three highly-educated and distinguished men, of recognised ability, we take the millions of educated and uneducated, learned and unlearned, young and old, rich and

poor, the effect of such a system becomes still more apparent, and its consequences still more hopelessly absurd and appalling.

To sum up: 1. We believe that Christ came upon earth to teach the truth. This, indeed, is stated in the most emphatic way by Christ Himself in the hall of Pilate, *viz.*: "For this was I born, and for this came I into the world; that I should give testimony to the *truth*" (John xviii. 37). We believe with St. Paul that "the Church is the pillar and ground of truth"; that the Holy Spirit is to "remain with her for ever to teach her all truth"; and that "the gates of hell (*i.e.*, of error) shall not prevail."

2. We believe truth to be one, and that it cannot be anything but one, and in harmony with itself. We hold that two Churches, teaching contradictory doctrines, may both possibly be false, but by no possibility can both be true. That they may both be true we regard as a metaphysical impossibility, a self-evident absurdity. But if instead of two, there be five or six hundred claiming to be true Churches of Christ, the absurdity becomes more glaring and monstrous.

3. That there can be but one true Church follows, not merely from the intrinsic nature of truth itself, but also from the repeated and express declaration of the Divine Founder of Christianity, *e.g.*, "There shall be *one* fold or flock, and one Shepherd" (John x. 16). "Be ye all *one Body* and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, *one faith*, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 4, 5). "You are the body of Christ, and members one of another," and so forth. Further, the very comparisons our Lord makes use of prove the same truth. He likens His Church to (*a*) a

Kingdom, (*b*) a City, (*c*) a House, (*d*) a Family, (*e*) a Fold or Flock, (*f*) a Tree, (*g*) a Body, etc. All these figures imply a most essential unity, together with diversity. What is more various than the different parts of a living body? Yet what is more essentially one, and in harmony with itself?

4. If unity be essential and vitally important, what constitutes the bond of unity? "The Bible," cry out the Protestant Churches. "The living and imperishable voice of the Divinely assisted and (*because* Divinely assisted) infallible Church," exclaim Catholics. The one system maintains true unity in a community of two hundred and fifty or three hundred millions, consisting of men of every race and nation, and character and disposition, and language under heaven. The other system cannot secure unity, even within a national Church, among men of the same race and country, and of the same general character and antecedents—nay, cannot secure unity upon the most vital points of Christian doctrine either among the people, or the clergy, or even among the bishops themselves.

There is no logical resting-place between Catholicism and Rationalism.

CHAPTER IX.

THEOLOGY AND VIVISECTION.[1]

"There is in the whole world no cruelty more cruel than ignorance, and it is this cruel ignorance which we, by experiment, seek to dispel."—Sir WILLIAM GULL.

"The results of experiments on living animals have been of *inestimable service* to man, and to the lower animals, and the continuance and extension of such investigation is *essential* to the progress of knowledge, the relief of suffering, and the saving of life."—The recorded opinion of the General Meeting of the British Medical Association, 1892.

"The law of sacrifice is the law of life, which no one can escape; and, provided it is conducted with reverence, of necessity, and under supervision, I regard *experimental research* not as a mere privilege, but as a moral duty."—Sir ANDREW CLARK.

"Experiments on living animals are as necessary to the further progress of medical science and the healing art, as are experiments in test-tubes to the advancement of chemistry, theoretical and applied."—Sir JAMES CRICHTON BROWNE.

GOD alone is the alpha and omega, the beginning and the end of all things (Apoc. i. 8). In creating He neither did nor could propose to Himself any supreme end other than His own honour and glory. "The Lord hath made all things for Himself:

[1] The *Dublin Review*, in its notice of a preceding edition of the present work, pronounces judgment on this chapter in the following words: "The chapter on vivisection is

the wicked also for the evil day" (Prov. xvi. 4). Although God created whatever exists for His own glory, yet He ordered all things "in measure and number and weight" (Wisd. xi. 21), and so disposed them that the lower subserves the higher, according to a regular and beautiful plan, in such wise that the entire visible creation is linked together like a chain, culminating at last in man himself, whom God has set over all His works, and whose intellect and free will enable him, in obedience to the Divine command, to rule over irrational nature.

Thus the rude, inorganic earth, the structureless rock and soil, and water and air, sustain, and indeed were made for the express purpose of sustaining, every form of vegetable life, from the most delicate filament of microscopic moss and lichen, invisible to the naked eye, right up through the various genera and species, to the vast primeval forests spreading over entire continents. The whole vegetable world, in its turn, is so ordered by the wisdom of God as to support, nourish, shelter and protect every variety of sentient being, from the mouse to the mammoth, and from the tiniest creeping or swimming animalcule to the most gigantic sea or land monster that the world

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so eminently sensible and convincing that it will probably serve to reassure completely all except those hopelessly bigoted and fanatical extremists who put the sufferings of a few animals above the common good of the human race. *For such, no argument is possible;* but there are many others who love animals, who shrink naturally and rightly from the idea of inflicting pain upon them, and will therefore *be thankful to Monsignor Vaughan for showing them so clearly the rights and wrongs of the question from a Christian and Catholic point of view.*" (*Vide D. R.*, Jan., 1898, p. 206.)

contains. Finally, the whole earth,[1] organic and inorganic, vegetable and animal, is made for the rational use and benefit of man. "Thou hast made him a little less than the angels; Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast *set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast subjected all things under his feet,* all sheep and oxen; moreover, also the beasts of the fields, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea that pass through the paths of the sea" (Ps. viii. 6-9).

Though all things were made for man, yet not all administer to his needs in the same way, or in the same degree. Some creatures serve him *directly:* as the air he breathes; the stones composing the walls of the house he dwells in, and protecting him from the wind and rain; the cattle and sheep he feeds upon; and the horse and mule that carry his burdens, and share his fatigues. Other creatures serve him *indirectly,* by serving those that serve him: as the grass that nourishes his sheep and cattle; or the deep sea that provides a home for the fish that furnish him with food, or that in other ways supply his wants. The umbrageous forests, where no human foot had ever trod, and which slowly grew throughout unheeded centuries, long before man's creation, were, nevertheless, destined to serve him in due time. Their gradual growth and slow decay, repeated again and again, through unmeasured ages, have formed the vast mines of

[1] Some have objected that the whole earth cannot have been made for man, because he cannot utilise and put into requisition every part of it. But as well say that a high road is not made for man because his feet do not cover every inch of its surface; or that a school feast is not made for the children because they cannot eat *all* the cakes, nor drink *all* the tea and lemonade.

precious fuel, the great coal measures, from which we now extract material for our fires. Nor is this dominion of man over all the visible world around him a usurpation. On the contrary, it is at God's express command that he lords it over the whole earth.

"Fill the earth" was the command of the Supreme and indisputable Lord of all things, "and *subdue* it, and *rule over* the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and *all living creatures* that move upon the earth" (Gen. i. 28). There is no disputing the force or meaning of this passage. Nor was this command intended to apply to man merely in his state of innocence;[1] for, speaking somewhat later to Noe and his sons, when the Deluge had destroyed the rest of the human race, He repeats the command in a still more emphatic manner. "Let the fear and dread of you," spoke the Infinite God, "be upon all the beasts of the earth, and upon all the fowls of the air, and all that move upon the earth. *All the fishes of the sea are delivered into your hand. And everything that moveth and liveth shall* be meat for you" (Gen. ix. 2, 3).

That God has absolute dominion over all the works of His hands is as certain as that God exists. But it is equally certain from the above texts, not only that He could, but that He actually did, give man a right and an authority over every irrational creature that is to be found in this world. It is, of course, to this simple fact the inspired writer refers in Psalm cxiii. 16: "The heaven of heaven is the Lord's; but *the earth He has given to the children of men.*" The "earth" includes not merely the lifeless material that constitutes its chief bulk, but all that it contains—

[1] I[a] q. xcvi., a i., ad 4[um], St. Thomas.

fruits, vegetables, beasts, birds, fish, insects, etc. It is put, in a word, in antithesis, and contrasted with the "heaven of heaven," which certainly does not mean the mere vacant place, irrespective of its celestial inhabitants. St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians (iii. 22), distinctly repeats and adds emphasis to the same truth when he writes: "All things are yours." St. Thomas thus interprets these words: "That is, for your use and benefit."[1]

When man makes use of creatures and exercises the dominion over them that God has given him, he is acting justly, and honestly, and no one has any business to find fault with him for so doing. Man may, consequently, rightly consult his own convenience and advantage rather than the well-being and comfort of the lower animals, over whom God Himself has set him. We may select an illustration of this fact from the inspired word of God. Turning to the book of Tobias we find his God-appointed guide and instructor, who was no mere erring man, but the glorious Archangel Raphael, actually giving him an object-lesson in this very doctrine.

While standing with his feet in the river Tigris the youth Tobias beheld a large fish approaching him, upon which he cried out to the Archangel: "Sir, he cometh upon me." His heavenly guide replied: "Take him by the gill, and draw him to thee. And when he had done so, he stretched him out upon the land, and he began to pant before his feet." Such is the Scriptural narrative. Here then we have a creature violently withdrawn by the gill from his natural element,

[1] In the original edition, p. 372, quotations are given from St. Thomas and Lessius, S.J.

and panting on the ground in an agony of suffocation. And what says the angel? Does he call it cruelty, and bid his pupil cast the suffering monster back into his native stream? Quite the contrary. "The angel then said to him: take out the entrails of this fish, and lay up his heart, and his gall, and his liver for thee: for these are necessary for useful medicines" (Tob. vi. 5). In plain truth, the beast had to endure a very appreciable degree of suffering and to surrender not merely his liberty, but even his life for the mere temporal advantage of man. The great principle underlying the above teaching of Scripture and theology may be thus formulated. God has given man dominion over the whole irrational creation. Therefore, in enforcing his rights he may, in so far as it is necessary, allow beasts to suffer pain and inconvenience. The preceding remarks refer, of course, to man's relation towards irrational though sensitive creatures in general. The special purpose of this chapter, however, is to consider the much-debated question of vivisection,[1] about which a vast deal of nonsense is written and upon which a vast deal of unnecessary acrimony and abuse is expended.

We must begin, however, by anticipating a very common and specious objection. How is it possible that any verdict upon the point can be gathered—it is objected—from the great theologians, considering that vivisection is a thing of

[1] Vivisection strictly includes only cutting operations; but the term is extended to any physiological experimentation upon living animals, as compression of parts by ligatures, subjection of the creature to special conditions of atmospheric pressure, temperature and food, exhibition of poisons or other drugs, inoculation of disease, etc.—*Vide Century Dictionary.*

modern date, and could never have come under their notice, nor have commanded their attention? Now, as a matter of fact, vivisection "has been practised since the dawn of history, and flourished extensively all through the Middle Ages."[1] This at once disposes of the objection. But, since it is quite obvious that it was never practised in the precise manner, nor on the same scale as obtains at the present day, we will, for the sake of argument, allow the objection to remain, and give our answer.

Vivisection, as such, is evidently nothing more than a mode of action. It can neither create nor can it evolve new principles of morality, for the simple reason that principles are eternal and rooted in the very nature of things. At most, vivisection can but present itself as a new case which falls under the application of moral principles already in existence. Now, all these principles have met with a full and exhaustive treatment at the hands of the schoolmen. Of course, it is as clear as noonday that the ancient theologians could not have anticipated modern progress in *medicine* by treating explicitly of the actual case of vivisection, any more than they could have anticipated the results of modern progress in *acoustics* by discussing the validity of a confession heard, or of an absolution conferred,

[1] "A toutes les époques, on a pratiqué des vivisections. On raconte que les rois de Perse livraient les condamnés à mort aux médecins, afin qu'ils fissent sur eux des vivisections utiles à la médecine. Selon Galien, Attale III. Philométor, qui régnait 137 ans av. J. C. à Pergame, experimentait les poisons et les contre-poisons sur des criminels condamnés à mort. . . . On peut considérer Galien comme le fondateur des vivisections sur les animaux."—*Vide* Pierre Larousse. Tome 15.

through the telephone. Such applications are, as they would have termed it, *in infima specie*; and their solution, and that of others as well, is to be sought and found in the ordinary and acknowledged determining principles of which the schoolmen have bequeathed us a most searching and careful statement. It would, indeed, be difficult to discover any vital consideration which enters into the question of vivisection, of which the principles of solution are not to be found in the *Summa* of the great St. Thomas, either where he treats of the vice of cruelty, or where he speaks of animals and their place and use in the economy of creation.

The objection founded upon the modernness of the practice of vivisection—even supposing it to be quite modern, which we have seen it is not—is utterly baseless and imaginary. One might as well argue that a newly discovered metal would not fall under the ordinary rules of gravitation, as that a new case of conscience could not be disposed of by an application of the ordinary principles of morality.

In vivisection man inflicts a certain amount of pain upon the beasts, not indeed for the sake of causing pain, which *ex hypothesi* he regrets, but solely for the sake of some advantage or some gain to himself or to his fellow-man. Now the question arises—Is this lawful or not? Here, I take it, lies the whole kernel of the matter, so we must put the point as clearly as we can, and as logically. Thus, of two things, one. Either it is lawful for man to inflict pain upon beasts for his own advantage and profit, or it is not. To cause such an amount of pain as is unavoidable for the obtaining of the end he has in view, is

evidently either a sin or not a sin. There is no middle term ; it must necessarily be one or the other. Take the first alternative. Say it is a sin. Very well. Then it necessarily follows that to drive a horse in a cab ; or to imprison a thrush in a cage ; or to hunt the fox or the hare ; or to put a worm on a fish-hook ; or to add a butterfly to a collection, and thousands of similar common practices, are all actual sins. And if sins, then not to be committed for any consideration whatsoever—no ! Not even to save a thousand worlds could one dig one's spurs into a horse's flanks, or chain up a dog in one's backyard, or spit a worm upon a hook. This is the absurdity to which the one alternative binds us.

Then let us assume the other, and only remaining alternative, and grant that none of the foregoing practices are sins. What then ? To concede so much is to evacuate one's position altogether. It is to establish the important and far-reaching principle that beasts may be made to suffer, at least in so far as it may be necessary or conducive to the well-being of man, for whose use and rational service they have been made ; or, as St. Thomas expresses it, " for whose sake they exist."[1]

Now, observe, the *degree* of suffering inflicted does not enter into the essence of the matter at all. Whether the pain be greater or less cannot affect the principle one jot. The theological axiom, " magis et minus non variant speciem," is as true and as universally admitted among theologians as the geometrical axiom, " the part can never equal the whole," is among mathematicians. Thus the whole matter at once reduces itself to a question of adjustment and proportion. For

[1] See Latin note in original edition.

the sake of a trifling gain, but a moderate degree of pain may reasonably be inflicted. But, as the importance of the end to be obtained increases, so may the amount of pain that is inflicted be increased. This will be manifest, if we consider the most ordinary examples.

Thus, merely for the pleasure and recreation of a spin through the open country, I may harness my horse, and compel him, *nolens volens*, to drag my carriage over hill and down dale, and to turn now to the right, and now to the left, as fancy may suggest. If, however, I am anxious to catch a train, and can do so only by putting spurs to my beast, and by pressing him, somewhat beyond his accustomed pace, there is a sufficient motive to justify this additional degree of harshness. But if I am travelling among some hostile tribe of savages, and I find myself so situated that escape will be impossible unless I use much greater violence, and so urge on my mettlesome steed that he does himself serious damage, and finally falls exhausted and dying by my camp fire, I am still guilty of no sin whatever. Why? Because I may most justly save my own life at the sacrifice of my horse's, even though its death be accompanied with the greatest agony.

Cardinal Newman, with his customary accuracy, states the relation between man and beast thus :—

"You know *we have no duties towards the brute creation;* there is no relation of justice between them and us. Of course, we are bound not to treat them ill, for cruelty is an offence against that holy law which our Maker has written on our hearts, and it is displeasing to Him. But they can claim nothing at our hand; into our hands they are *absolutely* delivered. We may use them,

we may destroy them at our pleasure, not our wanton pleasure, but still for our own ends, for our own benefit and satisfaction, *provided that we can give a rational account* of what we do."[1]

Such is the clear exposition of the doctrine by, perhaps, the profoundest and greatest thinker of the last century. But here some may be inclined to ask: Is man then allowed to abuse and maltreat the dumb beasts *just as he pleases?* Does this doctrine afford him licence to inflict the most hideous torture for any purpose, however trivial and insignificant? Most certainly not. And this brings us face to face with another important principle—a principle which corrects and controls and moderates the first, and keeps it within due bounds. This second principle is that "Man, being a rational creature, must act in a rational manner." God alone is the absolute Master and Lord of the irrational creation, and though He has given man dominion over every living thing, He requires that this dominion should be exercised in accordance with the rational nature which man possesses, and which should hold all his lower and animal appetites in subjection. Man has no right to act in an arbitrary and irresponsible way towards any creature whatsoever, not even towards himself—which he does, for instance, when he commits suicide. "You are not your own" (1 Cor. vi. 19). Hence the authority over the beasts, communicated to him by God, though a very real authority, must be exercised in a reasonable manner. Reason, not passion, not cruelty, not lust, must guide his actions and superintend his conduct. Indeed, St. Thomas teaches:

[1] *Vide Omnipotence in Bonds*, sermon preached before the Catholic University of Dublin.

"Reason is the guiding principle of all human acts; and every other principle is subject to it, but in different ways."[1] So that, who orders his life and action according to sound reason, acts justly, uprightly, and in a virtuous manner, as all theologians agree.

Hence it follows that before utilising beasts in any way that can cause them pain, reason must be consulted. Reason must assign the conditions and the degree of pain permissible under different circumstances. Now reason demands three conditions. Firstly, that there be a *motive;* secondly, that there be a *just* motive; and thirdly, that there be some *proportion* between the end to be gained and the means employed in reaching that end, thus, *e.g.*, in the matter of vivisection, the amount of suffering inflicted must bear some relation to the result aimed at.

If important results are obtained by certain experiments on rabbits, cats, dogs and other beasts, then such experiments are certainly not, in themselves, contrary to the law of God. Such experiments should, of course, be conducted with all the gentleness and humanity that is possible; anæsthetics should be used where they are applicable, and no useless or unnecessary pain is to be tolerated. But under such conditions vivisection has always been, and is, tolerated by the Church.

We must here point out that it is no part of the Church's duty to decide whether the practice of vivisection is necessary for the advance of medicine or not. She is not called upon to decide the medical disputes of medical men. How far vivisection has aided and helped on medical science;

[1] Consult 1. 2, q. 58, 2. 0.; et q. 90, 2 c.; et 100, 1 c.; et q. 102, 1 ad 3.

how far it has enabled doctors and physicians to diminish the sufferings and agonies of thousands of human beings, and to reduce the violence of disease and the paroxysms of fever all over the world, are extremely interesting questions, but questions wholly and entirely outside the province of theology, as such. These are questions, not of morality, but of fact ; they concern past and contemporary history, not the sacred science. We may frankly admit that they are vexed questions, and may be strongly debated ; though we are bound to confess that the overwhelming weight of evidence is in favour of the vivisectionists.

Some men declare that vivisection is utterly useless, and calculated to do more harm than good. Such men have no right to make use of it. Then, by all means, let them refrain. But the great and leading physicians, men of the highest position and authority in their own profession (in spite of the obloquy to which the declaration exposes them), are most clear and decisive in asserting its immense use and advantages. In a letter to the London *Times*, for instance, signed by some of the most eminent doctors, occurs the following declaration :—

" It is hardly possible for us to name any progress of importance in medicine, surgery or midwifery which has not been due to or promoted by this method of inquiry.

" (Sir) ANDREW CLARK.
" (Sir) JAMES PAGET.
" (Dr.) SAMUEL WILKS.
" (Sir) GEORGE HUMPHREY."

Or take the resolution unanimously passed in the General Assembly of the International Medical

Congress in London, in 1881, under the presidency of Sir James Paget, when the leaders of the profession in this and all civilised countries were assembled. The resolution runs as follows :

" This congress records its conviction that experiments on living animals have proved of the *utmost service to medicine in the past, and are indispensable to its future progress.* Accordingly, while strongly deprecating the infliction of unnecessary pain, it is of opinion, alike *in the interests of man and of animals*, that it is not desirable to restrict competent persons in the performance of such experiments."

Again, H. Taine assures us that, " les vivisections ont créé presque toute la physiologie du système nerveux." " Sans cela (*i.e.*, vivisection) il n'y a ni physiologie ni vraie médecine possibles." And another authority says : " Renoncer aux vivisections serait condamner la physiologie á un éternel *statu quo*." These are but specimens of the judgments of great authorities. We might fill a volume with others in the same sense.[1]

Although the evidence in favour of the immense utility of vivisection seems to us simply overwhelming, yet, as has been already observed, this is not a point about which the Church is concerned in the slightest degree. So far as her position goes it may or may not be useful. The part of the theologian is to define and to declare what is, and what is not, lawful, *under each hypothesis*. As to which hypothesis is the right one, and which the wrong, it is not her place to decide. To expect her to settle such matters of pure fact is like expecting her to declare, not only that one

[1] Consult *Experiments on Animals*, by Stephen Paget, with an introduction by Lord Lister (Unwin, 1900).

man may not poison another, but to determine also what drugs are, and what are not, poisonous. If little or no good comes of it, it is, of course, wrong ;[1] for to inflict pain for no purpose, or for a wholly inadequate purpose, is sheer cruelty, *and sheer cruelty is always wrong.* If, however, very substantial good does come of it ; if, as the great physician, the late Sir Andrew Clark, writes, " it is hardly possible to name *any* progress of importance in medicine, surgery or midwifery which has not been due to or promoted by vivisection," then indeed it is perfectly lawful, and may be practised with a safe conscience, so long as the conditions are observed, which have been pointed out above, and so long as no needless suffering is intentionally inflicted.

Some of the opinions expressed upon this subject are not only very singular, but also very silly. Thus men who, without the smallest qualms of conscience, freely indulge in such pastimes as hunting, shooting, hawking and fishing are (or pretend to be) horror-stricken at the very idea of vivisection ; though, if there be any choice in the matter, it must surely be in favour of science over sport. Many have no scruple in running down a hare and harassing it with hounds, until, after an hour or more perhaps, the poor panting creature, trembling in every limb, and almost beside itself with terror, yields itself at last to the mercy of the dogs. In this case they allow an unfortunate beast to be tortured for hours by gentlemen and

[1] It is apparently on this ground that Cardinal Manning disapproved of the practice. On the purely *theological* aspect of the question there is no difference whatever between him and ourselves ; for did we take his views of the facts we should also discountenance it. But the expert and professional evidence is far too strong to be set aside.

ladies in scarlet, merely for sport and idle pastime, which can lead to no practical result, while they turn up the whites of their eyes in virtuous indignation because the same animal is called upon to suffer—though it may not be half as long nor half so severely—for the sake of some really important and scientific end, perhaps even the saving of many human lives. Mr. Lecky writes : " What a strange form of benevolence is that which, in a country where field sports are the habitual amusement of the higher ranks of Society, denounces as criminal even the most carefully limited and supervised experiments on living animals, and would thus close the best hope of finding remedies for some of the worst forms of human suffering, the one sure method of testing supposed remedies which may be fatal, or which may be of incalculable benefit to mankind " (*The Map of Life*, p. 39). It is difficult indeed to understand the intellectual condition of such men ; or to explain how they can logically maintain that it is right for a fisherman to torture an animal with a fish-hook while angling, but quite wrong for a doctor to probe it with a dissecting-knife while studying. To us, at least, to be cut with a sharp scalpel by the skilful hands of a conscientious physician for some really valuable end would be far preferable to having a nasty steel hook fast locked in the extremity of one's throat, and being tugged and tugged about by a man pulling away at the other end by a string, which he now loosens, and now tightens, according as the struggles grow more or less intense. Especially when one remembers that after some hours of this treatment one must expect to be hauled in, utterly exhausted and worn out, to die panting and gasping on the bank.

The *Medical Press* of September 4th, 1901, is worth quoting :—

"The worthy folk who refuse to sanction experimental inquiry into physiology and disease in the lower animals must find plentiful matter for wringing of hands in the busy universe of science. Pathological laboratories are being daily added to all our large general hospitals, where technical vivisection is carried out on a large scale in order to discover what is the exact nature of the maladies from which patients are suffering in the wards. To take an example : a patient is afflicted with some obscure lung complaint, as to which prolonged and careful observation has failed to form a decided diagnosis. A portion of his sputum is inoculated into the tails of a couple of white mice, or under the skin of two or three guinea-pigs, and it is noted whether the animals recover or die, and if the latter, whether they succumb to pneumonia, tubercle, or some other disease set up by known micro-organisms. The verdict thus obtained, due technically to vivisection, is clearly of vital importance to everyone concerned. On the one hand, it may carry the death-warrant of the patient, or, on the other, may determine a course of treatment which will end in his complete recovery. Without a biological test of the kind in doubtful cases, no physician could sincerely say he had given his patient the fullest advantages afforded by modern scientific medicine. The matter, therefore, resolves itself into a direct balancing of the lives of mice and guinea-pigs against those of our fellow-creatures. Which is to win ? Medical men are on the side of humanity ; on which side are the vivisectionists ?"

Is it not very absurd to say that it is *just* to

vivisect a horse with whip and spur, and to goad it on until it drops in an agony of exhaustion, on the mere chance of thereby bringing succour to one drowning man—which no reasonable person would deny—and yet to declare, in the same breath, that it is *unjust* to vivisect a rat or a rabbit, even though the result were to prolong the lives of *thousands* of our fellow-creatures? In a word, to condemn vivisection when *properly* performed by competent and humane men (which is the only form of vivisection we are contemplating), is hopelessly illogical, unless all sport and pain-giving pastimes be condemned likewise. If one is wrong, the other is much more so; if the former is to be condemned, so must the latter, and far more strongly, and far more vehemently, since the latter has not even any of the important results that are claimed, and claimed with much show of reason, for the first.

"Which" (a writer in the *British Medical Journal* asks very pertinently) "is the greater cruelty: to infect a herd of mice, to imprison thousands of rabbits for long hours with broken limbs in steel-jawed gins, to geld a herd of horses or of sheep, or to perform a physiological experiment in the laboratory *after giving proof that the object is one important to knowledge, and likely to benefit mankind?* Nay, the pain and suffering inflicted in any one country in this way is probably greater in a day than that inflicted in the whole physiological laboratories of Great Britain in a year. Moreover, in the one case anæsthetics are never administered; in the other, they are so in most cases, and if they are not so administered, a special declaration and a special licence is required."

If we must not vivisect, then to be logical and

consistent, neither must we poison mice, nor entrap rats, nor geld cattle, nor perform any other action which involves suffering to bird or beast—which is a perfectly legitimate *reductio ad absurdum.* Q.E.D. Perhaps it will help us to realise the whole bearing of the question more clearly if we state some among the common objections we have actually heard raised against the ordinary teaching of theology.

Objection No. 1. If scientific discovery and the advance of medical knowledge can justify the infliction of pain on irrational animals, the same motives should justify the infliction of pain upon human beings. Even far more so, since the human subject provides a far more perfect object-lesson. Why not, therefore, vivisect our criminals instead of the inoffensive and sinless beasts ?

Answer. There is no parallel. The beasts have been created for the use and benefit of man ; but there is no evidence to show that one set of men has been created for the use and benefit of another set, in the sense in which these words are applied to beasts : nor can it be proved that God has given one set of men that dominion over any other set of men, which He has undoubtedly given to all men, over the beasts of the field. Besides, if, because you may vivisect a rabbit, you are therefore justified in vivisecting a man, then it would also follow that, because you may kill a rabbit for food, you are also entitled to kill a man for food, which is absurd. Man with his immortal soul, his eternal destiny, his supernatural state, his relationship with the God-Man, etc., stands on a totally different platform. No Christian or believer can fail to see the measureless chasm that divides man from the beast.

Objection No. 2. To cut, or experiment upon living and sensitive animals is cruel. Cruelty is a sin. And no advantage or gain, or advance in medical knowledge or surgical skill, can justify the commission of sin. Evil cannot be done that good may come of it. Therefore nothing can justify the painful experiments made upon living animals.

Answer. This very childish and utterly fallacious argument has been urged again and again, and is constantly cropping up in the papers, to the no small amusement of the intelligent reader. The answer is plain enough. The kind but simple soul that urges the objection is unconsciously begging the whole question. That "cruelty" is a sin we most readily admit. Nay, more: we affirm, without any "if" or "but," that "cruelty" is always wrong, and because always wrong, nothing can ever justify it; no conditions nor circumstances can make cruelty—while it really is cruelty—right or allowable. And this cannot be otherwise, because "cruelty" is "*malum in se*," *i.e.*, an evil in itself, and by its very nature. Where, however, the objector runs off the straight lines of reason, is where he attaches an altogether false meaning to the word. What is cruelty? Is the mere infliction of pain "cruelty"? No. Otherwise the force of gravity is cruel when it drags down the avalanche and smothers a village beneath a mountain of ice and snow; and the wind is cruel when it drives the battered barque against the precipitous cliff, and wrecks crew and passengers without remorse. Is it even "cruelty" (*a*) to inflict pain and great pain, (*b*) on a perfectly innocent person; and to do so (*c*) knowingly and deliberately? No. Not necessarily; otherwise the dentist and surgeon, especially in the days

before the discovery of anæsthetics, must be regarded as veritable demons of cruelty—instead of ministers of mercy.

Suffer us to explain. Some actions are "in themselves" *indifferent*, and some actions are "in themselves" *evil*. We call that act "*indifferent in se*" (or, *in itself*) which may be sinful or not sinful, which may now be good and now be bad, according to the intention and the circumstances. On the other hand, we call that act "*evil in itself*" which is, and remains evil, under every conceivable circumstance and despite the end in view. As an example of the first, is it wrong to put a man to death? Is that a good or a bad action? It may be either. It depends upon circumstances. If we are dealing with an innocent and an innocuous man, it is a great crime—a foul murder. If we are dealing with a man guilty of murder, justly condemned by the rightful authority, then it is not a sin at all, but quite the reverse—an act of laudable justice. The physical act *in se* is indifferent, and derives its moral complexion from the special circumstances attending it, and the end in view. As an example of the second, take blasphemy. Blasphemy *qua* blasphemy is essentially evil. Its sinfulness does not arise from the circumstances attending it. It is evil *in* its very nature. Hence, though circumstances may arise which would justify our putting a man to death, no possible circumstances could ever arise, under any hypothesis, to justify our giving way to blasphemy.

Now it is abundantly clear that the physical act, by which we inflict pain, whether on man or beast, is something which in this theological sense is in itself wholly indifferent. This is only another way of saying, that under one set of circumstances

it may be wrong, and under another set of circumstances it may be right. It lends itself to either possibility. The mere mechanical act of cutting off a child's arm or leg is *in itself* neither a good nor a bad action : it is an indifferent one. In fact, we have no business whatever to condemn the act till we have all the circumstances clearly and fairly before us. It would be most unfair to do so. If it be done for the mere pleasure of causing pain, or indulging a cruel disposition—well, it is, of course, a horrible crime. If it be done by some skilled physician simply because he knows that to save the child's life it is absolutely necessary to amputate the diseased member, it is, indeed, identically the same act, but, in the second case, so far from being a " horrible crime," it has become an act of mercy and of loving kindness. Hence those who are in such a violent hurry to condemn the vivisectionists are allowing their zeal to run away with their reason, and may well be counselled to allay their skipping spirits with some cold drops of modesty.

Hence, if we are asked : Is it allowable to cut off a dog's leg ? Is it allowable to subject a rabbit to special conditions of atmospheric pressure, temperature and food ? Is it allowable to inoculate a guinea-pig with the germs of certain diseases ? and so forth—the only answer we can make is, that it is impossible to decide until we know the circumstances. All these material actions are, *in themselves, absolutely indifferent,* in the theological sense. As in the case of the decapitation of a human being, so in these cases also, the lawfulness or unlawfulness depends upon circumstances. If they are done in a spirit of cruelty ; or for a wholly inadequate motive ; or on some merely frivolous

pretext, they are, of course, unlawful ; but if they are done by competent and humane hands, under proper and reasonable restrictions, and for the express purpose of benefiting mankind, and administering to man's pressing needs in sickness, disease and death, then such acts are lawful and good, and to be even commended and approved. Indeed, these skilled physicians are but exercising the dominion over the beasts that God has granted them ; and enabling the irrational creatures to fulfil the end of their creation the more completely, in thus serving the interests and needs of the great human family.

For the sake of our weaker brethren, we may as well declare here, without the slightest fear of contradiction, that theologians permit no "*cruelty*" whatever, under any circumstances. They undoubtedly sanction the infliction of pain. True. But only under circumstances in which, not merely in the language of the Schools, but in the language of all educated persons, it has altogether ceased to be cruelty. The famous *Century Dictionary* (as all other reliable lexicons) rightly defines cruelty to be " an act inflicting severe pain, and done with *wilfulness* and *malice*." And we really cannot reconstruct the English (and, indeed, every other language also), and readjust the clear and obvious meaning of simple words to suit the silly fads and sentimental fancies of a few extreme anti-vivisectionists. These anti-vivisectionists, who seem to think that a tenderness towards beasts justifies the greatest rancour and intolerance towards their human opponents, will, doubtless, continue to dub all " vivisection " cruelty. Like other persons, when they dislike a thing, they are apt to invent bad names for it, and thereby con-

fuse thought, blacken the fairest reputations, misrepresent sound doctrine, and throw dust into the eyes of simple folk. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him," is a proverb upon which they feel they may safely rely. But so far as calm reason and common sense are concerned they might just as well call a butcher a "bloody murderer of the innocent," or an "inhuman monster," because he slays oxen and sheep; and a surgeon an "ogre of cruelty," because he amputates limbs, or cuts off an appendix.

The following extreme case was proposed some little time ago. Dr. B. has a patient called X. who is dying of a certain disease. He is conscientiously convinced that if he could only discover certain information as to the use and effect of certain remedies he could save the life of X. But he also conscientiously believes that he can arrive at that knowledge, but only by means of experiments made in vivisection, with all the suffering necessarily involved therein. Ought Dr. B. to save the life of X., and by adding his discovery to medical science save the lives of countless numbers of others also, even though he should have to torture his dog for the purpose? To a theologian, of course, to state the case is to answer it. If pain upon a brute cannot be inflicted under such a condition, it can only be because the infliction of pain is an evil *in se;* but if an evil *in se*, then no pain whatever can ever be inflicted for any reason, which is absurd. *Ergo, etc.*

If our Divine Lord were living visibly upon earth in these days, even He would scarcely escape prosecution at the hands of the anti-vivisectionists' society. Indeed, the indignation of its more enthusiastic members, were they, in this year of grace, 1911, to witness the scene

narrated in St. Mark's Gospel, may be more easily imagined than described. "There was near the mountain a great herd of swine, feeding. And the (evil) spirits besought Jesus, saying: Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them. And Jesus immediately gave them leave." Thereby inoculating, as it were, the beasts—the poor dear little innocent pigs—with the devilish virus, in order to save the possessed human beings. What was the consequence? Well, St. Mark continues: "And the herd of swine, with great violence, were carried headlong into the sea, being about two thousand, and they were stifled in the sea." Not altogether a painless death.

Sometimes the objections of the anti-vivisectionists take a somewhat different form. A most horrible and wholly fanciful picture of a physician, or rather a demon in human shape, is drawn in glowing colours, and represented as inflicting unheard-of cruelties[1] upon some unfortunate beast for no adequate purpose; and then we are asked defiantly, is vivisection lawful? They represent

[1] "'I am satisfied [writes Sir James Crichton Browne] that the pain caused by the floggings administered to the school children in London *on any one day*—experiments on vertebrate, warm-blooded, living animals, under the licence of the School Board, and with very problematical advantages—is *vastly greater* than that arising from *all the vivisections* performed in *all the laboratories* of the United Kingdom *in the course of a year*.' That statement, from one of the leading medical authorities, will surely silence the cry about cruelty. It might be well to remember, too, for the sake of consistency, that rabbits are trapped, and allowed to break their limbs and torture themselves for a whole night, and the suffering thus inflicted is a hundred times greater than can possibly occur under the present system of vivisection. It is well to look facts fairly in the face, especially in the domain of science."—*Ludgate Monthly*, May, 1894.

a series of the most exquisitely agonising experiments upon a dog or a monkey, which make one's flesh creep even to read, performed for some wholly trivial and insufficient motive, and think to snatch from us an answer in contradiction to our principles. Of course, we condemn, in common with all theologians, such abominable abuses ;[1] but "abusus non tollit usum." To experiment in the manner described above, is to use irrational creatures, not according to reason, but in direct violation of the clearest dictates of reason, and in glaring contradiction to the canon already laid down, which demands a proportion between the end to be obtained, on the one hand, and the means to be employed, on the other. Such cases, whether true or false, possess no weight whatever against the lawfulness of vivisection, and it is foolish to present them as arguments ; they prove only that, like many other practices, vivisection may be abused, as well as used. The Church denounces the *abuse ;* she sanctions the *use.* Is it sinful to take a glass of wine because many a man gets beastly drunk ? Will a highly coloured picture of the fighting and quarrelling, the cursing and swearing, the debauchery and impurity, the squandered fortunes, the desolated homes, the impoverished families, the bloodshed and murder, and much else traceable to *excessive* drinking, ever make it a sin *in se* to swallow a glass of whisky, or to empty a tankard of beer ? If not, then neither can the practice of vivisection become wrong in itself because there are individuals who are cruel and heartless—aye, who, under pretext of good, do harm. As well say that it is sinful to read the Scriptures, because hundreds of false sects

[1] See Latin note in original edition.

abuse the practice by wresting the texts (*cf.* 2 Pet. iii. 16) in support of their heresies.

To approve of vivisection as something lawful in itself, when properly conducted, *juxta modum*, and for a good, useful and humane end, is not to approve of the excesses and cruelties sometimes—possibly often ?—perpetrated in its name.

Unfortunately there are a certain class of persons who confound reason, violate logic, and obliterate the clearest guiding principles in one long incoherent and wild scream of horror at the violation of the supposed rights (?) of animals. They mix up sentiment with sense, imagination with fact, and so mingle the false with the true, and the sublime with the ridiculous, in one long tirade of indignant scorn and invective, that after reading such effusions one is left marvelling how so much strength of feeling can coexist with so little common sense. We Catholics may well rejoice that we are safeguarded from all narrowness, and protected from both extremes by the clear theology of the Church, which determines the position we are to hold with the greatest neatness and precision.[1] Sympathy with every form

[1] A certain Mr. H. Salt, criticising the above remark, writes: "The results of this 'precision,' in regard to vivisection, as shown in the absolutely conflicting positions attained by Cardinal Manning and the more democratic Catholics on the one hand, and by the Vaughan-cum-Rickaby school of reactionists on the other, are decidedly entertaining."—We feel far too kindly towards Mr. Salt to begrudge him the "entertainment" that his ignorance of Catholic theology seems to have procured him. Indeed we wish him joy of it. At the same time we may observe that had he known anything of the Sacred Science he would have discovered that the so-called "conflicting positions" exist only in his own too fertile imagination. Still, "where ignorance is bliss, it were folly to be wise." Let him consult pp. 149-151, and the note on p. 127.

of suffering is, of course, most admirable; but where are we to stop if we take sympathy as our sole and guiding star? Why, indeed, should sympathy, which begins by forbidding every form of vivisection, however carefully carried out, not go on to condemn all slaying of animals, even for food; all breaking-in of horses, even for riding or driving; all chaining up of dogs, even for defence of house or property; all destruction, even of vermin? It is a question of mere degree. Though sympathy has an excellent work to do, it is not everything, and other considerations must also be allowed to exercise their due weight. As Carlyle so well observes: "It is grievous to think that this noble omnipotence of sympathy has been so rarely the Aaron's rod of truth and virtue, and so often the enchanter's rod of wickedness and folly. No solitary miscreant, scarcely any solitary maniac, would venture on such actions and imaginations as large communities of sane men have, in such circumstances, entertained as sound wisdom."

England seems specially subject to mental epidemics. A craze is started. A certain number are taken with it—some very badly. The temperature rises to fever heat. Delirium follows, and the symptoms become alarming.[1] The intel-

[1] This delirium reaches such a degree in some instances that persons are found who would seem to prefer the company of their dogs to the possession and enjoyment of even God Himself! St. John, writing about Heaven in the Apocalypse, says: "Without are dogs and sorcerers, etc." (xxii. 14); upon which a lady, interpreting his words in her own way, writes to *The Westminster Gazette*, September 1, 1900, as follows:—"If it is true, then may it be granted to me to have lived in such a way that I also may be one of the despised 'withouts,' so *that I may have the company of my dog.* — Elizabeth L. Banks." Any

lectual fever or distemper that happens to be in possession at the present hour is anti-vivisectionism. Some form of this distemper is of pretty regular occurrence. It may be reckoned on at intervals like other natural visitations. Indeed, there must be some scores of persons in this country now passing through an acute stage of the anti-vivisection craze. What are we to do? To borrow Carlyle's words: "We must deal with it as the Londoners do with their fogs—go cautiously out into the groping crowd, and patiently carry lanterns at noon; knowing by a well-grounded faith, that the sun is still in existence, and will one day re-appear."

NOTE.

The following interesting and apposite letter by the Rev. John Gerard, S.J., was addressed to *The Spectator*, but (like other letters enforcing the same doctrine, copies of which afterwards came into my hands) it was, for too obvious reasons, not allowed to appear.

"THE RIGHTS OF ANIMALS.

"SIR,

"Many excellent persons are grievously shocked by the doctrine that animals possess no 'rights.' May I be allowed to offer a few considerations in support of a view which appears to be so completely misunderstood?

"In the first place, how can creatures be said to possess 'rights,' which, without injustice, we may deprive of their lives and of all that makes

comment on such blasphemy is superfluous. I quote it merely to illustrate the spirit of the age, and the inconceivable lengths to which some people will go.

life worth living? But we slaughter animals without scruple, for the sake of their flesh, their skins or their ivory. Some we painfully render incapable of reproducing their kind, that they may be more docile in our hands. Others we rob of their newborn offspring that we may enjoy more delicate meats. Horses are made to spend their lives at the bottom of coal-pits to draw out trucks: when we have got out of them all the work we can, we use them to feed our hounds. Puppies and kittens are drowned if we consider them superfluous. Pheasants are bred only that they may be shot, and foxes preserved to be hunted. If these creatures have rights of any sort, they must be outrageously violated by such treatment.

"Moreover, for the sake of a small benefit to ourselves, we do not hesitate to add torture to death; yet, if the 'conscience of mankind' is to be our test, it may be questioned whether a majority of healthy-minded men refuse to eat lobsters and crabs because they have been boiled alive, or *pâté de foie gras* because the geese producing it have been doomed to life-long indigestion.

"But, again, if any animals possess rights, all must do so: tigers, puff-adders, sharks and tapeworms, as much as dogs, cats, rabbits and canary birds. Yet what 'rights' do we allow to rats and mice, bugs and fleas, tsetse flies and 'black beetles'? It has recently been suggested that a test should be exacted of all seeking public office, who should be required to declare themselves sound on the rights of 'the higher animals.' But what animals are 'higher' except such as it suits us so to designate? In the matter of intelligence a rat could give many points to a lap-dog, and fleas are considerably more capable of education than guinea-

pigs. If we arbitrarily assign rights to some and not to others, is it not we ourselves whom we recognise as the source and origin of those rights?

"If this be so, it is hard to understand what the term 'animal rights' may signify. But does it follow that those who deny their existence must therefore advocate or approve wanton cruelty? For my own part, I hold this utterly abominable, and from personal knowledge I know that men who, because of the doctrine they teach, have recently been stigmatised as heartless and unfeeling, would not hurt a fly, and would use all their influence to inculcate humanity upon others. For it is not only the violation of others' rights that we should avoid: we have duties also to ourselves, and are bound to avoid everything degrading to our nature. A boy outrages no one's rights when he wallows in a mud-puddle; yet what parent or master would be unconcerned to see him do so? A grown man riding a cock-horse upon a long reed would be a disgusting spectacle. There are people who are not edified to behold the worship of a poodle. The owner of a museum or library has, I suppose, a strict 'right' to destroy his own pictures, statues or books; yet our instincts would certainly be revolted were he to exercise such rights. If this be so when the works of man are concerned, far more with those of God. These are, indeed, given for our use and benefit, and so far as that purpose is concerned we have full dominion, but when with no advantage in view we wantonly misuse them, we debase our own nature by misuse of every means which were intended to help towards its elevation; and it is because of this self-degradation that cruelty on the part of man is so detestable.

"If this be not the explanation, how is it that similar cruelty on the part of animals towards one another does not revolt us? No one of them assuredly has any notion of the rights of any other, and our most cherished pets will inflict on creatures weaker than themselves tortures as grievous as were ever laid to the door of a vivisectionist, and without the slightest attempt to spare the sufferer any jot of pain. Not unfrequently they will devour their own young. How is it that no 'rights' are infringed in such cases, and that the perpetrators of such deeds are as inculpable in their performance as in the most winning artifices whereby they captivate our affection?

"When, ignoring the gulf between ourselves and them, we argue the case for the brute creation on the ground of 'rights' to be set against our own, it is inevitable that we should open the door to abuses of the gravest kind, and dull our sympathies in regard to our own brethren,[1] who, as a rule, claim our service on the score of duty alone, unaccompanied by pleasurable or æsthetic considerations. Instances are not far to seek. Is it not a fact that many who expend their

[1] Let me remark that History itself affords many illustrations of the truth of Father Gerard's words, thus:—

"'In Egypt,' says Lecky, 'there are hospitals for superannuated cats, and the most loathsome insects are regarded with tenderness; but human life is treated as it were of no account, and human suffering scarcely elicits a care. The same contrast appears more or less in all Eastern nations.' Again, some of the men most conspicuous for their activity during the Reign of Terror in France were very fond of pet animals. Couthon was strongly attached to a spaniel; Fournier lavished his love on a squirrel; Panis kept two gold pheasants; Chaumette had an aviary! and even the sanguinary Marat was devoted to doves" (*vide Evolutional Ethics*, etc., p. 145. By E. P. Evans, 1898).—AUTHOR'S NOTE.

sympathy upon cats and dogs have but little left for the poor ;[1] that they are not remarkable for kindness and consideration towards their dependents ; that sometimes even their own children appear to hold a lower place in their hearts than do their pets ? in extreme instances such sentiments are openly professed ; thus, not very long ago, on occasion of a muzzling order, it was argued

[1] How often, for instance, one finds people leaving large sums of money for dogs or cats, while thousands of poor children are clamouring for bread ! Here is a specimen case which I cut out of *The Times* [Sept. 28, 1894, p. 8] :—"The Will of Miss Charlotte Rosa Raine, of St. Margaret's Lodge, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, Hayland's Manor-house, Ryde, Isle of Wight, who died on June 19, was proved on August 28, the value of the personal estate in the United Kingdom amounting to upwards of £86,000. '*And as regards my pussies*,' she gives her dear old white puss Titiens and her pussies Tabby Rolla, Tabby Jennefee and black-and-white Ursula to Ann Elizabeth Matthews, and she directs her executors to pay her £12 a year for the maintenance of each cat so long as it shall live. Her long-haired white puss Louise and her black-and-white puss Dr. Clausman to her handmaiden, Elizabeth Willoughby, and her Black Ebony and White Oscar to Miss Lavinia Sophia Beck ; and her executors are directed to pay them also £12 a year for each of these pussies so long as it shall live. All the remainder of her pussies she gives to the said Ann Elizabeth Matthews, and she directs her executors to pay her out of the balance of the dividends of her father's Lambeth Waterworks shares, £150 a year for their maintenance so long as any of them shall live ! ! ! 'but this is not to extend to kittens afterwards born.' There is also a direction to Ann Elizabeth Matthews to live out of this annuity in the village of Haylands (or elsewhere) in a cottage and garden *for the maintenance of the same pussies*, unless the Rev. William Martin Spencer is willing to permit the pussies to reside on the premises and in the garden at Pound. If her poor old black mare Fenella should be alive, she authorises them to take from her estate a sum sufficient to pay for her board and lodging as long as she shall live."—AUTHOR'S NOTE.

publicly in print that it would be a less evil for a few human beings to die of hydrophobia than for so many dogs to be made unhappy; and quite recently, in a letter which I have seen, a champion of animal rights has proudly declared that the beggars in our streets find it a more potent means of exciting the compassion of the charitable to have a dog or cat as their companion than a baby.

"JOHN GERARD, S.J."

The following is a copy of another letter sent to *The Spectator*, but declined:

"SIR,

"The Catholic Church condemns cruelty plainly enough, but, in accordance with Scripture, teaches that animals have no rights. Scripture is plain (Gen. i. 28, and ix. 2), and the Divinely ordered wholesale and continuous slaughtering of animals for sacrificial purposes and for food—nay, even sometimes merely for vengeance on owners—is utter confutation of any notion about 'animal rights.' In the New Testament, too, in the whole of our Lord's teaching there is not one syllable about any supposed rights of animals. Indeed, as regards the particular question of vivisection, it is time to say that the *principle* of it is covered by such words of His as '*How much better, then, is a man than a sheep?*' and '*Ye are of more value than many sparrows*,' etc.[1]

[1] Such doctrine seems to be ill understood by some of our countrymen. The following evidence, offered under oath, and in the open Court, is an instance of the length to which people will go:—"The proprietor of a dogs' infirmary at Tattersall's corner sued Mr. Harding Cox for the board and lodging of seven dogs, and the *régime* was explained. They are fed on essence of meat, washed

"For the Catholic Church then to condemn the using of animals in any way likely to be beneficial to the human race, would be to fly in the face of Scripture and to try and take away a liberty which God has given. . . .

"Yours, etc.,
"ANTI-CANT."

"The Rt. Rev. J. C. Hedley, O.S.B., Bishop of Newport, asserts that animals have no rights, because they are not rational creatures, and do not exist for their own sake. 'The brute creation has only one purpose, and that is to administer to man, or to man's temporary abode.' This is the doctrine set forth more than six centuries ago by T. Aquinas, and recently expounded by Dr. L. Schutz, professor in the theological seminary at Trier, in an elaborate work entitled *The So-called Understanding of Animals, or Animal Instinct.*"[1]

"The Jesuit, Victor Cathrein (*Stimmen aus Marien-Lach*, 7th Feb., 1895, p. 164), denies that man has any duties towards the lower animals" (p. 99, E. P. Evans).

The Rev. Joseph Rickaby, S.J., in his *Moral*

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down with port wine, and have, as a digestive, eggs beaten up in milk and arrowroot. Medicated baths and tonics are also supplied, and occasionally the animals are treated to a day in the country. This course of hygiene necessitated an expenditure of ten shillings a week. The defendant pleaded that the charges were excessive, but the Judge awarded the plaintiff £25. *How many hospital patients receive such treatment?*" This case (quoted by Mr. Lecky in his *Map of Life*, p. 40) may be seen in *The Daily Express* of Feb. 16, 1897.—AUTHOR'S NOTE.

[1] *Evolutional Ethics*, etc., p. 96. By E. P. Evans, 1898. See also an Article on "The Lower Animals," in the *Catholic Dictionary* of W. E. Addis and T. Arnold, published in 1884.

Philosophy, teaches the same thing; remarking that "beasts, not having understanding, and therefore, not being persons, cannot have any rights." Indeed, it is in virtue of this that we are entitled to domineer over them, and use them as we do. "Noi dominiamo le bestie non solo per la superioritá della nostra natura," as the learned Mgr. Mario F. Peraldia writes, "ma perchè *le bestie non hanno diritti*."

The Rev. Chas. Coppens, S.J., the learned Professor of Medical Jurisprudence in the Creighton Medical College, Omaha, and the writer of several well-known works, expresses himself as follows:—

"A physician can, with a safe conscience, use any brute animal that has not been appropriated by another man to experiment upon, whatever specious arguments humane societies may advance to the contrary. Brute animals are for the use of man, for his food and clothing, his mental and physical improvement, and even his reasonable recreations. Man can lawfully hunt and fish and practise his skill at the expense of the brute creation, notwithstanding the modern fad of sentimentalists. The teacher and the pupil can use vivisection for the sake of science, of mental improvement and intelligent observation. But is not this cruelty? and has a man a right to be cruel? No. No man has a right to be cruel; cruelty is a vice degrading to man's noble nature. But vivisection practised for scientific purposes is not cruel. Cruelty implies the *wanton* infliction of pain."

"The teaching of humane societies condemning all vivisection is due to the exaggeration of a good sentiment, and to *ignorance of first principles*. For they suppose that sufferings inflicted on brute animals are a violation of their rights. Now we

maintain that brute animals have no rights in the true sense of the word."

"Rights and duties suppose free beings, *i.e.*, persons: now an irrational animal is not a person: it is not a free being having a destiny to work out by its free acts; it is therefore incapable of having duties. Duties are matters of conscience; therefore they cannot belong to the brute animal; for it has no conscience. And since rights are given to creatures because of the duties incumbent on them, brute animals are incapable of having rights. When a brute animal has served man's purpose, it has reached its destiny."

"God said to Noe and his posterity: '*Everything that moveth and liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herbs, have I delivered them to you.*' But He emphatically adds that the lives of men are not included in this grant; they are directly reserved for His own disposal. 'At the hand of every man,' He says, '*will I require the life of man.*'"[1]

* * * * *

The only Catholic ecclesiastic of any weight that the anti-vivisectionists have been able to instance, as *apparently* siding with themselves, is the late Cardinal Manning. But his words, if duly considered, will be found, in simple truth, in no way out of harmony with the ordinary teaching of the Church.

On 25*th* June, 1881, speaking at the annual meeting of the Victoria Street Society for the Protection of Animals from Vivisection, the Cardinal used the words: "I take the first opportunity that has been offered me to renew publicly my firm determination, so long as life is granted me, to

[1] *Vide Moral Principles and Medical Practice.* Benziger Bros., A.D. 1897, pp. 39-42.

assist in putting an end to that which I believe to be a detestable practice, *without scientific result*, and immoral in itself."

In the above often quoted words, the Cardinal expresses his wish to put a stop to the practice of vivisection. But why? Because he does not consider it advantageous or useful; because, to use his own expression, he believes it to be "*without scientific result.*" But here lies the very point upon which the whole question turns! Indeed, there are no theologians who would not condemn the practice as strongly as the Cardinal, if once they could join him in saying: "I believe it to be without scientific result." But on this purely medical aspect of the question, His Eminence cannot be regarded as an authority. He was neither a medical man, nor even a member of the College of Physicians: and we can hardly be blamed if, on that crucial point, we prefer the authority of such experts as Sir James Paget, Sir G. Humphry, Sir Andrew Clark, and the thousands of others, of almost equal eminence in the profession. Granting the Cardinal's assumption, *viz.*, that vivisection is without result, we must all agree that it is "cruel," and condemn it as wrong and immoral, but we find it quite impossible, in face of the evidence, to deny its utility. And that makes just all the difference.

I knew the late Cardinal well. In fact, it was my privilege to dwell for years in the same house, and I must say that whenever I spoke with him on the subject, the point on which he always laid stress was, the "utter uselessness" of experiments on living animals.

Again, we are repeatedly reminded that:—

On 21*st* June, 1882, speaking at the house of

Lord Shaftesbury, he said: "There is not a religious instinct of nature, nor a religion of nature, nor is there a word in revelation either in the Old Testament or the New Testament, nor is there to be found in the great theology which I represent, no, nor in any Act of the Church of which I am a member, no, nor in the lives and utterances of any of those great servants of that Church who stand as examples, nor is there an authoritative utterance anywhere to be found in favour of vivisection."

We are most reluctant to criticise any statement coming from so great and so good a man as Cardinal Manning. Indeed, we have hitherto purposely abstained from all comment on the above passage lest we might seem to be wanting in respect for one, for whom we have, in reality, the most sincere veneration.

Since, however, so much weight and importance are given to this passage by anti-vivisectionists, and since it is so persistently flaunted before our eyes, we feel that we are amply justified now in pointing out its utter inconclusiveness. In the meantime, the keen pleasure and smug satisfaction that it has afforded our opponents serve but to show how completely they are domineered by sentiment, and how little they are influenced by reason.

Any unprejudiced man, possessing the most elementary power of analysis, will perceive that the paragraph just quoted contains no shadow of proof or argument. The statements there made tell quite as strongly against the practice of tea-drinking or of tobacco-smoking as against the practice of vivisection. In fact, they cannot condemn the one practice without, in the same breath, condemning the other two.

That the whole line of reasoning is hopelessly inconsequent, may be at once perceived by the simple expedient of substituting some recognised and *undeniably innocent* practice in the place of the disputed practice of vivisection, say, for instance, that of wearing goloshes. Indeed, the unlawfulness of using goloshes might easily be proved in the actual words applied by the late Cardinal to vivisection. Thus, one might declare, not only with great solemnity, but with *absolute truth*, that "there is no word to be found either in the Old or in the New Testament, nor is there a single sentence in the works of the great theologians, nor any authoritative utterance of Pope or Council" that can be cited in favour of the practice of wearing goloshes, or of the practice of vivisection, or of the practice of using pocket-handkerchiefs. But what then? Well! we are just where we were. No conclusion follows, either for or against.

It is surely unreasonable to suppose that the Bible and the General Councils, and the great theologians must make specific mention of every single practice or custom which is lawful! Had His Eminence been able to point to even one isolated *condemnation* of the practice, there would be something to give thought pause; but if everything must be considered sinful and wrong which theologians do not expressly approve and commend by name, then it is wrong to skate or slide! which is absurd. Thus the whole argument falls to the ground.

Yet, it is on *such* arguments that the anti-vivisectionists rely.

We may sum up the Catholic position as follows:

1. The Church discourages all infliction of pain, whether upon man or upon beast.

2. Where pain *must* be endured, and cannot be avoided, she prefers that the beast should suffer, rather than the man.

Thus, suppose a great physician discovers what he takes to be a remedy for some malignant disease. That is to say, he thinks he has found what will cure the said malady, but still he is not quite sure. It might possibly have the opposite effect, and even accelerate the patient's death, for he has never actually tried the drug (or the operation, as the case might be) on any living creature. Now, what is he to do? On whom is he to try his remedy *for the first time?* Surely he cannot be allowed to make the experiment on a human being, with the possibility of sending him into his grave? Rather let him give the disease to a rat or a rabbit, and then study the effects of his remedy upon it. If we prevent him from using it upon a beast *first*, so as to test its properties, it means, either (*a*) that we must remain for ever in our ignorance, or else (*b*) that he must test his remedy upon a human being.

We are fully persuaded (in spite of the anti-vivisectionists) that it were better that he should be allowed to run the risk of killing the rabbit rather than the man. For, as the old adage runs, *Experimentum fit in corpore vili.*

CHAPTER X.

ON WOMAN'S SOCIAL STATUS.

THE superiority of intellectual over brute force is, I take it, universally admitted. Knowledge sits as a Queen enthroned in royal state, while Force is her veriest henchman, the servant of her will, and the executioner of her commands. This is undeniable; yet, notwithstanding its truth, we feel constrained to assert that, in its ultimate analysis, it is not intellect but physical force that rules and controls, and that wears the crown of sovereignty.

The most gifted man, with all his rich store of wisdom and knowledge and learning, is no match for the rugged bear or the hungry leopard, unless, indeed, he has been furnished with sword or rifle—unless, that is to say, he borrow greater force from powder or steel.

History itself recalls how highly-cultured Romans were compelled to fall back before the onward rush and the impetuous sweep of brawny Goths and hardy Huns: and how the more intellectual Greeks were routed by the more muscular Spartans. And the records of other nations and tribes would afford us many other instances, had we time to refer to them.

Granting the truth of this principle, it follows

that man, as the physically stronger, will ever rule and control the "weaker sex," appoint her place, and fix the foci of the ellipse along which she moves. No mere mental endowment, no mere ripeness of intellect, even were it equal to that of Solomon himself, has virtue enough to reverse or materially to alter that position.

Owing to the first sin, in which the woman was the chief transgressor, God Himself decreed that she should ever after live in subjection. "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," He said, "and thou shalt be under thy husband's power and he shall have dominion over thee" (Gen. iii. 16). And what was then decreed is found to be carried out and enforced at the present day, in varying measure, all over the world. So that even persons who refuse to accept the inspired words of the Bible can plainly see by the exercise of mere reason and observation, that women, *as a class*, can never snatch the sceptre of authority from the strong hands of the sterner sex, wherein God has placed it.

Why do I affirm this with such confidence? Well, for this reason. The contest, when carried to its final issue, must always resolve itself at last into an appeal to physical force. Whether justly or unjustly, force carries the day and decides the question. It likewise executes the sentence.

Woman may indeed come to plead her own cause in the future, even more eloquently and successfully than at present. She may read and study and think, and cultivate her mind till she can cope with the sage, and challenge even the wisest, on his own ground. She may convince the world of her talents, and astonish it by her exceptional accomplishments, but she cannot force an entry into any sphere or walk of life till man has first

given her the pass. Hence it is that history chats familiarly of her constantly varying fortunes, even at the mercy of man's capricious choice. Looking down the centuries, we find that her fate is always at his disposal, and varies with the degree of his civilisation and his religious training. At one time and place woman is his slave and menial, born but to cook his food, to grind his corn, or to hold his dart or spear; at another a plaything and a toy, with which to while away the idle hours—created, in fact, to yield pleasure and to amuse. "Savage life renders the woman a beast of burden. The man" (says Charlotte M. Yonge), "having to the full the animal instincts of pugnacity and indolence, puts upon her all that is toilsome, and multiplies wives in order that he may have other obedient hewers of wood and drawers of water."

At other times we find her treated as a companion, possessing some equality, and invested with certain rights and privileges, and now and then a queen or almost a goddess, whom man will, so long as the humour lasts, obey, serve, and almost worship on bended knee.

To the present day, in eastern countries, she lies a poor and ill-requited creature, a veritable slave indeed, even though her prison (or harem) be hung with silk and satin, and be carpeted with the softest and richest products of the loom. Without liberty, or a will to call her own, she is as much the property of her master, and as mere an administer to his pleasure, as the wines of his cellar or the horses in his stables. She may pine, as a caged bird, for liberty, and pine quite as fruitlessly. Until the hand that wields the sabre opens the cage, she must sing to the desire of the Satrap or the Sultan, and learn to charm her lord, lest per-

chance he frown upon her, and give her cause to weep.

Even the Romans, with all their culture and refinement, had little respect for a human form, however fair, that could not bear their heavy armour, nor ride a steed to battle, and treated their women as inferior beings; though at a later date (says T. Wade) they so won their way that "there was hardly an amusement, business, or debauchery in which they did not mix with men as parties or spectators." In most countries women have been, in remote ages, a vendible commodity, and sold as a business transaction, and for profit, though this was not always the case. Thus, the treatment of unmarried women and girls by the Babylonians had a somewhat worthier aim than mere sordid gain to be derived from the sale of them. "It was a yearly custom ('and a wise one too,' Herodotus says) to have a public auction in every village of all the maidens who had reached a marriageable age. They were put up for sale, one by one, beginning with the most beautiful; and when she had been sold, the next in beauty was brought under the hammer. The highest bidder became the buyer, and the rich Babylonians used to bid against each other to secure the handsomest. But—what is deserving of notice—the sale took place on the express condition of marriage, and the purchasers gave security for the fulfilment of this part of the contract. For the benefit of the poorer classes, who were desirous of marrying, and who coveted a sum of money in preference to a beautiful form, the plainer damsels were next offered for sale. When the beauties were all sold off, the ugliest in the lot was made to stand up, and knocked down to him who would take her,

on consideration of a small sum included. This was rendered possible, since the money raised by the sale of the handsome maidens was made to portion off those who were less fortunate in their attractions;"[1] and in this way they, too, were afforded a chance of securing a husband.

If Dionysius, Pliny, Tacitus, Livy, and Quintilian, and others are to be believed, a wife was but the chattel of her husband, a mere thing with no independent rights. Her life was what he chose to make it, and if he chose to take even that from her, he was deemed no robber, for was she not his? and may not a man do what he likes with his own? Little could she do even with her own home, without the sanction of her husband, whose authority, as recognised by the law, was wellnigh absolute and unimpeachable. He could put her to death, not merely for infidelity, but for drinking his wine without leave, or for purloining the keys of his strong room or safe, and for similar trivial reasons.[2]

In fact, woman was held to be in every way man's inferior. Aristotle declares her advice to be valueless, while Euripides speaks more disdainfully still.

> ". . . Equidem ad bona,
> Omnes mulieres nascimur ineptissimæ,
> Verum ad mala reperiunda longe aptissimæ"—

the general sense of which is, all women are born incapable of good, and with a great aptitude for all that is evil.

There is no doubt but that the introduction of Christianity did more than anything else to improve the position of the weaker sex. The Incarna-

[1] *Woman*, John Wade, 1859, pp. 15, 16.
[2] *Avv. : Santonide Sio.*, p. 81.

tion itself, together with the whole attitude and teaching of Christ, not only introduced a totally new view of human life, but supplied principles which, little by little, revolutionised the whole relation of the sexes, and gave to woman a position and a status to which she had never attained before, and to which, till then, she had never dared even to aspire.

Still, the change, great as it was, did not come about in one day. New principles, when first introduced, work their way gradually. They are like newly-sown seeds, which require time to germinate and to strike root, and which gather force and strength only after the lapse of years. The old prejudices and false judgments were in possession, and exercised considerable influence, and men do not grasp the full value and significance of unfamiliar views all in a moment. Hence women did not receive their full recognition at once.

Even the Saints and Fathers and Doctors of the Church sometimes spoke disparagingly of them, and were, at least, as it seems to us, severe, and we might say even harsh, in their judgments. Thus, St. Jerome says that the inconstant and fluctuating mind of a woman, when left to itself, speedily deteriorates. And St. Augustine declares the gentler sex to be not only gentle, but both incautious and weak-minded—incautious, he explains, because they often act by impulse and feeling, and do not carefully weigh and consider what they see and hear; and weak, because they are easily drawn either from evil to good, or from good to evil.

Possibly these statements may not be wholly true, or, at least, not true *now*; in so delicate a matter I dare not intervene, nor even express an

opinion. But this I will say: "If they are true, and if woman does really suffer from such defects, then, surely it is more her misfortune than her fault, and the natural result rather of want of opportunity than of any inherent incapacity."

Indeed, woman has sometimes shown herself to be possessed, not merely of immense courage and generosity, of which all will admit her capable, but also of great intellectual acumen, and of profound learning. She has in times past held positions and undertaken duties which demand judgment and tact, no less than considerable professional skill and technical knowledge. Not only has she ruled, with consummate prudence and success, large communities of her own sex, and maintained as well as founded great religious orders, both active and contemplative, but she has had under her, and subject to her rule, communities of men of acknowledged capacity and learning, several instances of which may be found in the Middle Ages. And though these formidable lady abbesses and Mothers-General have no power to suspend or to excommunicate the monks and religious placed under their jurisdiction, these were nevertheless obliged to obey them and pay them reverence. Thus, the Sovereign Pontiff, Pope Gregory IX., writing to the Patriarch Grandenus, bids him oblige, under ecclesiastical censures, the clergy and the canonesses (*clericos et canonicas*) to show proper reverence and obedience to the Abbess and to observe her wise injunctions and admonitions.

It may seem strange to find a female in such a position, but then it must be borne in mind that many of these abbesses were very remarkable women, and of extraordinary ability. Such was *Lady Mary Gabriel de Montemart*, Abbess-General

of the Congregation of Fontevrard, of the Order of St. Benedict, having under her jurisdiction not only convents of women, but several monasteries of men.

This position she continued to hold for some considerable time, with universal satisfaction and approval, and, it is said, to the great spiritual advantage of all concerned. She was a paragon of learning. As a mere child, she had acquired a wonderful fluency in Spanish, Italian, and Greek, as well as French, and as time went on, she soon made herself proficient in philosophy and in scholastic, dogmatic, moral and mystical theology. She bequeathed little of what she wrote to posterity, for, in her great humility, she generally burnt even her choicest compositions and translations; and, since she was the Abbess-General, there was no one in authority to check her indiscreet zeal, which has sadly, it would seem, impoverished the literature of the world.

It would not be difficult to draw up a long list of women who have distinguished themselves in various branches of learning, though their labours in the field of science and philosophy seem to have been scanty, and somewhat ephemeral in result. Though there is not time to mention all, we may set before our readers some few instances.

Thus, *Louisa Siega*, a native of Toledo, enjoyed a great reputation both as a philosopher and a philologist. She could both speak and write Latin, Greek, Arabic, and Syriac as readily and almost as correctly as her own tongue. Yet she, though the wonder of her age, was surpassed by *Iuana Morella*, a lady of Barcelona, who flourished in the seventeenth century. Of her it is related that when but a girl of twelve, she publicly main-

tained theses in philosophy. Six years later, when only eighteen, she held a public disputation in the Jesuit College at Lyons, whither she had fled with her father, who had been obliged to leave Spain owing to a homicide of which he had been guilty. Her extraordinary knowledge of divinity, philosophy, jurisprudence, music, and languages, so far from inflating her with pride, seems to have given her a true insight into the emptiness and vanity of all earthly things, for she retired from the world to the convent of St. Praxedis at Avignon, where she ended her days in peace and piety.

The celebrated Mexican nun, *Sister Iuana Ines de la Cruz*, though perhaps not quite her equal in ability and attainments, enjoys yet greater renown.

Probably the fair land of Italy has been as rich as any other country in learned women. History records that *Laura Cereti* taught philosophy publicly in the town of Brescia, and with great success, at the giddy age of eighteen; and that *Dorothea Bucca, of Bologna*, was actually created a doctor by the University there, and delivered lectures which were very largely attended; while *Isotta Nogarola* was even more remarkable still. Not merely was she well versed in philosophy and divinity, and in the works of the Latin and Greek Fathers, but to this was added readiness of speech and eloquence of expression. If, indeed, we are to trust contemporary writers, she was little, if at all, inferior to the foremost orators of her day. In proof of her powers of speech (and may we not add, "of her impudence"?), it is asserted that upon more than one occasion she harangued Pope Nicholas V. (A.D. 1447) and Pius II. (1458). It is said, too, that Cardinal Bessarion, chancing to

alight upon some of her writings, was so struck by the genius that they manifested that he travelled —before the age of railways—all the way from Rome to Verona, expressly to see her! She, alas! died at the premature age of thirty-eight, thus forming a marked contrast to her almost equally illustrious compatriot, *Cassandra Fideli*, whose long life stretched out beyond a century. For she died aged one hundred and two, famous, indeed, for the number of her years, but yet more famous for the extent of her learning.

Perhaps the most marvellous among the many learned women of Italy—certainly the most remarkable one that has come under my notice—is *Lucretia Conaro*, who lived in the seventeenth century. She seems to have found no difficulty in mastering Latin and Greek and Hebrew, and never relaxed in her efforts till she could understand most of the living languages of Europe. This proves that she was gifted with a most exceptional power of retention. But, strange to say, her reason and understanding were quite as wonderful as her memory. For her biographer goes on to recount that she became so eminently distinguished in philosophy, mathematics, and theology that the great University of Padua, without one dissenting voice, proposed to confer upon her both doctorates—*i.e.*, of philosophy and of theology. This most unusual proposal would probably have been carried out without delay were it not for her sex. She was a woman! On that account, the Bishop of Padua, who was then Cardinal Barbarigo, deemed it necessary to oppose such a step, in deference to the inspired words of St. Paul, that women are not to teach in the Church. Since, however, there was no clear canonical reason

against a woman teaching philosophy, she was forthwith presented with the title of Doctor of Philosophy in presence of a great concourse of Princes and Princesses and grandees from all parts of Italy, who came to do honour to their illustrious countrywoman, and to add to the solemnity of the occasion. It is also most gratifying to relate that if Lucretia Conaro surpassed all her contemporaries in wit and learning, she was also quite their equal, even if she were not their superior, in virtue and piety. When but twelve years of age, this remarkable woman consecrated her virginity to God, and turned with contempt from all who would seek her hand in marriage; for, as may readily be supposed, she had many suitors. A certain German Prince, who fell in love with her, even went so far as to urge her to let him seek a dispensation of her vow from the reigning Pontiff, so that she might become his wife. But neither his entreaties nor the strong representations of her parents could prevail upon her to alter her fixed resolve. She was anxious to enter the religious community of the Benedictines, but as her father absolutely refused to let her carry out this heroic design, she led a most saintly life within the enclosure of her own home, till at length she was called away to join the choirs above by One whose will not even the most doting father can overrule. She fell asleep in God in the thirty-first year of her age. Thus she had accomplished great things and attained to world-wide fame at an age when most of us are only just beginning to try our wings. We might mention *Pellegrina Amoretti* and *Bettisia Gozzadini*, and *Dotta Accursio*, who taught civil law in the University of Bologna; and the sisters *Calderine*, professors likewise of

civil law in the University of Padua (in the thirteenth century); and *Novella d'Andrea* (fourteenth century), who taught canon law in the University of Bologna. As to the last-named, it is interesting to note that Novella d'Andrea was not only a learned woman, but one of extraordinary personal beauty. It is even recorded that when she delivered her lectures, she was accustomed to cover her finely-chiselled features with a close-fitting veil, so that her scholars might be able to give their undivided attention to what she said, instead of losing themselves, as was their wont before, in the contemplation of her exceptional beauty and matchless form.

The names we have briefly recorded are but samples of many more which might be mentioned, such as: Vittoria Collonna, Veronica Gambara, Maria Gætana Agnesi, Laura Batti, Clotilde Tambroni, Cornelia Piscopio, etc. Still, even these few suffice to prove what woman can accomplish in the field of knowledge,[1] and raise within us a

[1] Individual women have, of course, distinguished themselves at one time or another in almost every sphere of life, even in the hunting field, like Miss Draper of Yorkshire, and still more, the Baroness de Dracek, who resided at a château on the Belgian frontier. Mr. Vyner, writing of her, says: "She was one of the most extraordinary characters as a sportsman, or sportswoman, that ever existed in this country or any other. . . . This most eccentric character hunted all the year round, and is known to have killed upwards of 670 wolves in her time, besides other game. . . . All her dinner-knives were mounted in stag-horn, killed by herself. . . . She rode in a green coat, leather breeches, and boots, her hair powdered and appearing behind in rather large curls, and sat in her saddle *à la chasseur*.

"It is interesting to note that the Baroness kept her saddles, seven in number, in saddle-rests, in her own bedroom."

suspicion that there is nothing in her nature or formation to render her intellectually man's inferior.[1]

When she can secure full liberty to expand, and when the same opportunities are given her which men enjoy, she proves herself to be in no way behind them in ability. But, unfortunately for her, her opportunities are largely determined by man, the physically stronger, and until he is first educated, refined, and rendered considerate and kind, her chances for self-culture and improvement are but small.

In times and places where men are savage and selfish, her lot is necessarily a hard one. Indeed, her misfortune, at all times and in every part of the world, has been that she is the weaker vessel, and must therefore submit to man's too often arbitrary and capricious will. And the less his imperious nature is tempered and softened by education and controlled by religion, the more she will have to suffer. Thus, among the aboriginals of Australia woman is treated as a domestic animal, and nothing more. Even when food is plentiful, she dare not touch any particle of it until her master is surfeited, and then she may devour his leavings. The late Catholic Bishop of Western Australia, Dom Salvado, writes that the native women seldom die, except at the hands of their fierce companions. "They generally despatch them," he tells us, "before they grow old and thin, for fear of losing so much good food. . . . Indeed, the woman is so little thought of, either before or after her death, that we may ask our-

[1] In spite of these examples, many (*v.g.*, N. Marini) maintain that they form merely beautiful exceptions, and the rule is that man's mind is superior to that of woman.

selves if a man does not put his dog exactly on the same footing as his wife when both are alive, and if he thinks more frequently or more affectionately of the one than of the other when they are dead, and he has gobbled them both down as food."[1]

Much the same story is told, with varying degrees of hideous detail, of almost all the barbarous races; and the lower the degree of civilisation, the greater is the helplessness and the worse the degradation of the unfortunate women.

The Fuegian women not only do all the drudgery and disagreeable work for the men, but so soon as they get decrepit and beyond work the men will generally devour them, after they have been suffocated by being held in the smoke of a fire prepared from green boughs. On being asked why they do not rather eat their dogs, they replied to an inquirer: "The dog is more useful; the dog hunts the jappo"—that is to say, the otter. Such is the result of savagery. Such is man without religion. We need not multiply instances.

Rising to a superior race of men, we find that even a considerable degree of civilisation and knowledge is not always enough to render the lot of women very much better, and that there is no true security for their happiness and freedom save in Christianity.

Thus, the Chinese, who are a highly industrious and civilised people in many ways, treat their women abominably. It is true that they do not eat them, but they look down upon and despise them; in fact, when a Chinaman has only girls born to him, he does not consider that he has any children at all; and he thinks no more of destroying some of them, if he have too many, than we think

[1] *Vide Sociology*, by C. Letourneau.

of drowning superfluous kittens or puppies. The conclusion that forces itself upon me from my study of the question is that woman's condition, in its broad outlines at least, depends upon the social and religious condition of man. So long as man himself is debased and savage and remains on a low level, he will hinder his weaker companion from attaining her proper intellectual stature. If she is to occupy a noble position and to act a becoming part in society, it is he who must first be educated and refined. From the nature of the case, she cannot conquer him by physical force, but only by the power of persuasion and the influence of her charms. She must win him over, and convince him of the sweet reasonableness of her demands, and induce him to do, from a sense of duty, of justice, and of love, what mere violence could never accomplish. But success in this presupposes in man a mind sufficiently elevated and refined at least to be sensitive to such attractions and open to persuasion. No amount of amiability, gentleness, beauty, and tact will extricate one from the claws of a savage beast; no gracefulness of demeanour, sweetness of temper, charm of disposition, or nobleness of character will serve as an argument against the cruelty of a ferocious animal, and man in his degraded state is often little better, especially when hungry and ill-fed. In such conditions of society women must suffer, and suffer deeply and suffer long.

As man himself grows better educated her chances likewise improve, and her position amends. His sensibilities and impressionableness, like his skin, become more delicate. He responds more willingly to her advances, till gradually she may awaken within him every tender and noble feeling.

He will pity her, befriend her, protect her, and learn to esteem, to honour, and to respect her. Where civilisation and religion have attained the highest development, as among the nations of Europe at the present day, her power reaches almost its zenith. Man has been so gained over that he now recognises her as his equal, and is prepared to throw open to her positions from which she has generally been excluded, and to offer her a freedom such as he himself enjoys.

The question is often asked, Is man or woman the greater? Is he or she the superior being? It is an idle and unprofitable query, for the special qualities of the one are not those of the other. It is like asking which is the better, the bee or the butterfly. Each surpasses the other, though in different qualities. It is like asking which is to be preferred, a good dance or a good dinner. Both are good, in their way, but it is impossible to institute a comparison between them. They stand on different platforms. The fact is that God, in His wisdom, designed man and woman for each other. If each contained precisely the same bodily and mental qualities, gifts, and characteristics, then the attraction between the sexes would have no existence. But now one is the complement of the other, and each seeks in the other what is deficient in himself or herself, as the case may be. If the man is more resolute, the woman is more gentle; if the man has a profounder reason, the woman has a readier intuition; if man has a stronger body, the woman has a more beautiful one. So, conversely, if the woman is more persuasive, the man is the more logical; if a woman makes the better nurse, man makes the better surgeon. If woman is more skilful with her needle, man is more skilful

with his battle-axe; if the woman is more ready with her tongue, the man is more ready with his fist. In fact, man and woman share the gifts and the achievements and the duties of life between them; and it would be very difficult to say, with any sense of confidence, which really bears away the palm. Man and woman possess their respective gifts, and each is first and each is best in those qualities that are peculiarly their own. If I remember right, it is Mr. Laurence Housman who represents a woman defending her position against a soldier in the following lines:

> You dress yourselves in uniforms
> To guard our native shores,
> But those who make the uniforms
> Do work as good as yours.
> For the soldier bears the rifle, but
> The woman bears the race!
> And *that* you'd find no trifle,
> If you had to take her place.

There is one sublime truth, at all events, that should bring joy and exultation and supreme satisfaction to every fair daughter of Eve, and that is that by far the greatest, the best, and the most glorious of all God's creatures, not even excluding the angels themselves, happens to be a woman. Among all mere creatures, whether human or angelic, Mary, the ever-blessed Virgin Mother of the incarnate God, stands without a rival—at once the most holy, the most exalted, and the most privileged.

For the rest, and speaking generally, my impression is that far more purity and piety are to be found among women than among men. Even among the canonised saints, raised upon our altars by the solemn judgment of the Church, I take it

that the women are more numerous, though the men are perhaps the more glorious and the more distinguished. No women can rival, for instance, St. Joseph, St. John the Baptist, and the Apostles.

But upon this point I do not pretend to speak with authority, though I believe I am correctly interpreting the mind of the Church.

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